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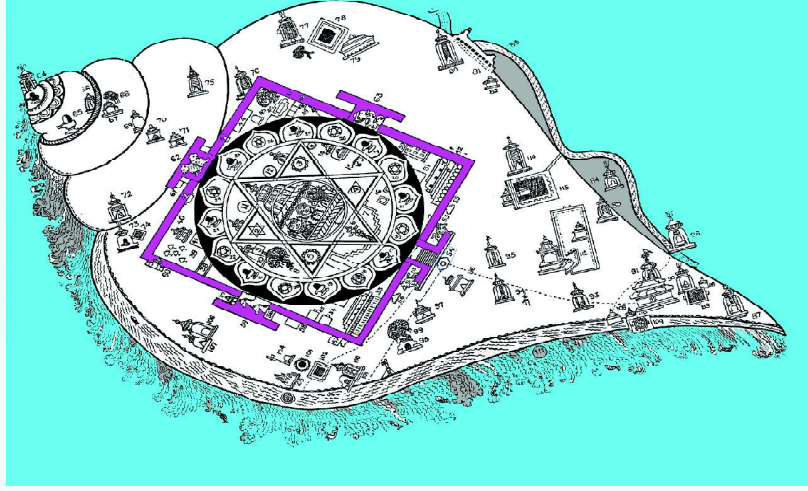
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Odisha Transformed and Recognition Pours in

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Odisha, Shri Naveen Patnaik has been innovative in his approach in running the Government in a transparent manner since assuming power in 2000. Under his able leadership the Government has been working hard to build a prosperous, empowered, healthy and self-respecting Odisha. He has introduced innovative schemes that are tailor-made for unique needs of different categories of people. Steps are being taken to ensure the basic needs, rights, social development and welfare of women, children, differently-abled, farmers, scheduled caste and scheduled tribes, OBCs, poor, rural people, urban poor, weaker and marginalized sections of the society, third gender individuals, senior citizens, labourers, employees, teachers, nurses etc. Pro-people programs and schemes are being executed with honesty, commitment, and success. His Chief Ministership of over 23 years is built around good governance and clean politics. In the last four years, regular fiscal reforms and strong administrative decisions in the state have strengthened the state's economy. Owing to the massive progress in Odisha the state has become a model in several sectors. "My Government" ('Mo Sarkar') program which started in 2019, **aimed at making governance people-centric**, has given a new model to the administrative system in the state. To provide even better governance the Chief Minister modified the 3T (Teamwork, Transparency and Technology) to 5T model of transparency, teamwork, technology, timeframe and transformation. Every action of the government is to follow these five cardinal principles which constitute core elements of democratic governance. This has brought about a new revolution in the country as 'Odisha Model'. The people of the state now get most services online in a time-bound manner. It has been exemplary for other states, Odisha has carved a niche for itself nationally and internationally.

- The fact that Odisha, devastated by the 1999 super cyclone, has since been awarded by the United Nations for setting global benchmarks in the field of disaster management and is being regarded as the leading state in the country in various welfare schemes amply stands for the commitment of Naveen Patnaik's government.
- Odisha has gone from starvation deaths to food security, and from being at the mercy of nature to becoming a role model in disaster management. Once known for poverty, Odisha is now known for the fastest poverty reduction in our country.
- The safety, security and dignity of women is important for the betterment and prosperity of any society. An inclusive society provides women and girls equally with resources and opportunities, enabling them to participate in and contribute to social, economic, and political development. The



Chief Minister said that empowerment of women and tribal communities is the cornerstone of the Odisha governance model, whose empowerment is a key strategy. Mission Shakti, one of the major steps in this direction, has become a symbol of women's self-respect, self-confidence, and self-reliance. Mission Shakti, launched on the eve of International Women's Day in 2001, with the objective of helping women to achieve economic independence by enabling them to have independent employment and income, has more than 6 lakh women Self Help Groups (SHG) with more than 70 lakh members. They also have additional employment opportunities under the schemes of various government departments. The journey of Mission Shakti from a program to a Directorate and subsequently to a dedicated 'Department of Mission Shakti' is a testimony of women's empowerment in the State. Promotion of Women's SHGs through credit and market linkages has led to the disbursement of loans worth Rs.4,000 crore in the last three years. In the coming five years, they will be given loans worth Rs.50,000 crore by converting them into MSMEs. Women's empowerment has made Odisha a leading state of India. This has given an identity and recognition to women from the marginal and lower income groups.

- The Government of Odisha as the first state in India started observing **10th November 2022** as '**Millet Day**' in the state. The primary aim of celebrating the day is to promote 'Mandia' or millets as a highly nutritive and eco-friendly food product. This has now been introduced under PDS and nutritional program under ICDS. In recognition of the efforts under the program, Odisha has been awarded "**Best Millet Promoting State**" under the "**Poshak Anaj Award**" by ICAR-IIMR and FAO during 2020-21 and the "**Skotch Gold Award, 2019.**" Since 2017, the Odisha Millets Mission has **won the praise of Niti Aayog**. The United Nations World Food Program has signed MOUs with the **Odisha Summit Mission** to study and follow this model in **Africa and other countries**. The ICAR, IIMR and FAO have been roped in for all these efforts.
- Odisha is the only state which has doubled the income of farmers. Farmers are the backbone of the state and the state has received the "**Krishi Karman Award**" four times because of their hard work. Agriculture and allied sectors are the largest employment generating sectors in our state. It is the key to the growth of the state and the social, economic development of the people.
- The President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu presented the award to **Ganjam district as the best district in the country and Hinjilikatu as the best block Panchayat or Panchayat samiti in the country at the "National Panchayat Puraskar 2023"** program held at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi. Apart from this, six other Gram Panchayats (GPs) have been awarded national awards for various outstanding works. Odisha has received a **total of eight awards under the National Panchayat Awards**. Ganjam Zilla Parishad has received Rs.5 crore, Hinjilikatu block Rs.2 crore and GP Rs.50-75 lakh as awards.
- The Government of India **awarded Odisha in January 2023 for the successful implementation of the School Health Program**. The school health programme under the Ayushman Bharat-Health and Wellness Centre was launched by the Centre in February 2020. The objective of the program was to impart skills ranging from emotional well-being, mental health, interpersonal relationships to



values and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. The program is being implemented in government and government-aided schools in the districts.

- The Department of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Odisha has been honoured and awarded in April 2023 for **outstanding performance in the implementation of the medical termination of pregnancy Act** at the National Conference on Comprehensive Abortion Care in Enhancing the Availability, Demand, Safety and Quality of Abortion Services in India organized under the aegis of World Health Organization and National Health Mission. This shows the commitment to uphold the dignity and human rights of women in the state.
- The State government has received **certificate of appreciation** for the sincere effort undertaken for the elimination of Malaria on World Malaria Day, 2022. Odisha has achieved 90 per cent reduction of Malaria positive cases in the last three years.
- Odisha Government was also awarded by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India in the year 2021 for its achievements in the field of **tuberculosis eradication**. The Union Health Minister has awarded the **Commendation Award to the Government of Odisha in the year 2022 for its innovative initiatives and sincere efforts to control Malaria in Odisha**. This has also been internationally acclaimed.
- Odisha is proud to use technology in the paddy procurement process. **Odisha has received the Global Planet Purpose Award for Drive for Results at the Planet Explore 2023-Transparency to Action Conference held in Washington DC, USA**. This award is given to the organization that quickly analyses, tests and implements the method of solving a problem in order to produce better results.
- Odisha is recognized as an international sports destination by successfully hosting the FIH Men's Hockey World Cup twice, the Champion's Trophy and hosting the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup India. It has established a world-class sports infrastructure in **Birsa Munda Hockey Stadium at Rourkela**. This is recognized by the **Guinness Book of World Records as the largest hockey stadium in the world**.
- The Department of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), Government of Odisha has bagged the **national MSME Awards 2022 as the first in the country** for various significant initiatives taken for the development of MSME sector.
- "My School Campaign" has transformed the school education system of Odisha and established a relationship of continuous growth. Odisha has the distinction of being **ranked among the top 10 states in the Performance Grading Index 2020-21** prepared by the Ministry of Education, Government of India.
- Odisha has received the prestigious "**Subhas Chandra Bose Apda Prabandhan**" 2023 award from the Central Government at the national level for **excellence in the field of disaster management**. Alert siren towers are installed at 122 locations along the coastline to alert citizens in advance about disasters and send alert messages by SMS. The **United Nations has highly**



appreciated the massive evacuation of people from areas that were to be affected before the impending cyclone and the successful disaster management system in coordination with government departments with zero casualties as the motto.

- Mukhyamantri Karma Tatpara Abhiyan (Mukta) has transformed the urban lifestyle of Odisha. The Mukta Yojana is an urban wage employment initiative for creating a climate resilient urban infrastructure that has gained global recognition. Odisha has been **awarded as one of the winners of the Award for Cities for the year 2021-22** by the World Research Institute to the Department of Housing and Urban Development under five programs of the Government of Odisha, in which ‘Mukta’ has been recognized as a large-scale employment programme, which has engaged the urban poor and non-formal and migrant workers in public works projects.
- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India has conferred the **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) Award 2022 as the “Best Policy Making State”** on Odisha in the special category.
- Through the world’s largest slum land rights and upgradation program “Jaga Mission”, the Biju Adarsh Colony program is being implemented to transform slums into model colonies. The role of the government as a leading state in resolving the problems of the urban landless poor by granting them land rights under the Jaga Mission has now gained global recognition. The United Nations has recognized the state government’s strong belief that the so-called slum-dwellers are indispensable parts of the city and that they need to be empowered with the safety of living instead of evicting them, and Odisha has been honoured with the **World Habitat Bronze Award-2023 for its slum improvement program Jaga Mission**.
- Odisha has achieved the **status of a path-breaking state in the country** by universalizing the supply of water through taps in urban areas.
- Odisha Capital Region Urban Transport (CRUT)’s ‘My Bus’ programme has **bagged the 2022 United Nations Public Service Award in the category of Promoting Gender Responsive Public Service** to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. By employing women and transgenders, CRUT has set an example in gender equality.
- The whole world was affected by the shadow of an unknown panic due to the impact of COVID-19. In order to combat this unknown epidemic, life-saving medicines were already stored in all the hospitals of Odisha under the infallible leadership of the scrupulous Chief Minister, all the patients were provided completely free treatment, Odisha set a humanitarian example across the country by providing oxygen to different states. Effective governance of Odisha, robust health infrastructure, testing strategy, initial control system, dedicated COVID hospitals, technically supported pandemic management, migrant management, decentralized management through Gram Panchayats and involvement of Mission Shakti contributed to the effective management of COVID-19. For this, the **World Health Organization has praised the Government of Odisha**.
- “Every life is precious” remains the guiding principle and priority for the transformation of the health sector of Odisha. Under the historic ‘Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana’ (BSKY) in private hospitals,



the government is bearing the medical expenses of up to Rs.10 lakh for women and Up to Rs.5 lakh for others. More than 500 hospitals across the country have been appraised and public health services have been re-established to provide free medical care to BSKY smart card holders in the state under the program. About 86 per cent of the poor, are benefiting from this scheme.

- Odisha has bagged the **first prize by creating the highest number of ABHA** (Ayushman Bharat Health Account) IDs in the Universal Health Coverage Day 2022 campaign. ABHA ID is a unique health ID for citizens to view medical records anytime and anywhere in India. It provides complete digitised history of their health which gives a better understanding of their health status to doctors and other healthcare providers for appropriate and timely diagnosis and treatment across India.

Apart from these recognitions Odisha is the first state in the country to bring separate budgets on climate coding, child, gender, nutrition and agriculture. Odisha is the second state in the country to have a complete e-budget.

In the last 23 years, the state government has implemented hundreds of schemes such as Biju Pucca Ghar Yojana, Food Security Scheme, Harishchandra Yojana, Mamata Scheme for the welfare of pregnant and lactating women in rural areas, Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana, etc. for the poor, as well as the Chief Minister's Nutrition Scheme, Fishermen's Welfare Scheme, Kenduleaf Pluckers' Welfare Scheme etc. to improve the quality of life in Odisha. Smart cards under Mission Shakti, Kalia Yojana, Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana have become the lifeline of the poor people of the state. The transformation of drinking from tap and My school program of education has brought about a revolutionary change.

To deal with the truly landlessness of the Adivasi community, the government has stepped up land allotment schemes like "Vasundhara", "Mo Jami Mo Diha" and encroachment resolution programs.

Not only in the formulation of the scheme, the government shown its commitment to the cause. The way for capital investment in the state has been smooth.

Under the leadership of the Chief Minister, who believes in enhancing women's representation in politics and government, Odisha became the **first state in India to ensure 50 per cent reservation for women's representation in the three-tier Panchayati Raj and Urban Local Government system and gave 33 per cent tickets for women's representation in Parliament in the 2019 general elections.** Today, more than 50 per cent of the designated women in Odisha are doing remarkable work as ward members, sarpanchs, block samitis, zila parishad members and presidents, councillors, corporators.

23 years of tireless work, exceptional personality, simple lifestyle and strong leadership are the keys to the success of the Naveen Government. He has been awarded the **Lifetime Achievement Award** and has earned the distinction of being **the number one Chief Minister time and again.** On several occasions, the **Central Government has awarded Odisha for various programs of the government.** He has always directed to pass on the success of the schemes to the last person in the queue. His call is to reach out the unreached with the facilities and schemes meant for them. The social security of every Odia has become a commitment of the state government today. An example of what a people's government can do for the people who has unstintingly reposed their faith in Naveen's governance for over 23 years.



"Odisha Football Academy, Bhubaneswar Football Academy and Capital Football Arena will provide world-class training ground for Football".

- Naveen Patnaik
Chief Minister, Odisha



- World Class training ground for State, national and international teams
- Only State to have six FIFA standard centres in close vicinity
- Girls football academy with artificial turf to be constructed at Aul in Kendrapada

As another significant development for the sports ecosystem in Odisha, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Odisha, Shri Naveen Patnaik inaugurated three Football Training Centres in Bhubaneswar ahead of the upcoming Intercontinental Cup 2023, thus marking the establishment of Odisha Football Academy, Bhubaneswar Football Academy and Capital Arena Football. Adding to the significance and grandeur of the occasion, the Indian Men's Football Teamwork including Team Captain Sunil Chhetri was also present to welcome a new era of football in Odisha.

The visionary initiative was developed at a cost of Rs.90 crore and features a total of six FIFA certified pitches, including five natural and one synthetic football ground, LED flood lights, players changing room, gallery, gym, coach room and other amenities. The three centres are situated at the heart of the



city and are at close vicinity to each other thus giving an added advantage to players and multiple teams to train simultaneously especially during tournaments.

Speaking on the inauguration, Hon'ble Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik said, "It is a great pleasure and pride to inaugurate the Odisha Football Academy, the Bhubaneswar Football Academy, and the Capital Football Arena. These sports infrastructures mark a significant milestone in the development of football in Odisha. They will provide world class training ground for football. With their launch, we aim to strengthen the football ecosystem and provide a nurturing environment for aspiring footballers to grow and flourish."

These facilities are equipped with top-notch facilities ensuring that athletes receive the best training and support to enhance their skills. These infrastructures reflect our commitment to promoting sports and nurturing talent in Odisha. I believe that these new facilities will not only encourage the youth to pursue their passion for football but also serve as a hub for Football training in the country, he added.

Chief Minister inaugurates three Football Training Centres in Bhubaneswar ahead of Intercontinental Cup 2023

Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik announced that Girls football academy with artificial turf will be constructed at Aul in Kendrapada district. Recently, Secretary to Chief Minister 5T Sri V.K. Pandian had visited Aul and had discussed with football players in this regard.

There is a lot of passion for football in the State hence grassroots level training program will be introduced for 6-12 year old kids at the three academies to encourage young kids from the state to take up football. Referee Education program and Coaches Education program will also be conducted here periodically.

The three centres will be training ground for National U-16 and U-19 National team, Odisha FC's (Men, Women and Youth) and all State teams (both men and women). Training sessions of U-13, U-15, and U-18 state academies will be held here. The centres will also be venue for State Leagues including FAO League, Odisha Women's League, School Leagues and tournaments, local leagues thus promoting an all-round conducive environment for the growth and popularity of football.

The football centres are key components of a robust football ecosystem in Odisha that places great emphasis on competition, coaching and infrastructure. The top-quality infrastructure will be on display for the world to see in the upcoming Intercontinental Cup 2023, that will feature; India, Lebanon, Mongolia and Vanuatu. The tournament commences on June 9th, with Lebanon taking on Vanuatu, while the home team India will take on Mongolia in their first game of the campaign.

Among others Sports minister Sri Tusarkanti Behera, Chief Secretary Shri Pradeep Kumar Jena, Development Commissioner Mrs Anu Garg, 5T Secretary Shri V.K. Pandian, Sports Secretary Shri R. Veneel Krishna were present at the function.



Shree Jagannath Culture Gallery in Kala Bhoomi

“Odisha Crafts Museum: Kala Bhoomi” - an institution under Handlooms, Textiles and Handicrafts Department, Govt. of Odisha was established at Shilpi Vihar, Pokhariput, Bhubaneswar and dedicated to the public on 25th March, 2018. It is managed by State Institute for Development of Arts & Crafts (SIDAC) - an organisation under H.T. & H. Department, Govt. of Odisha.

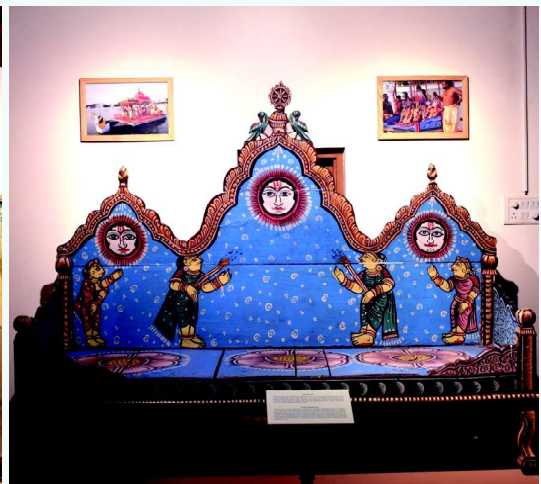
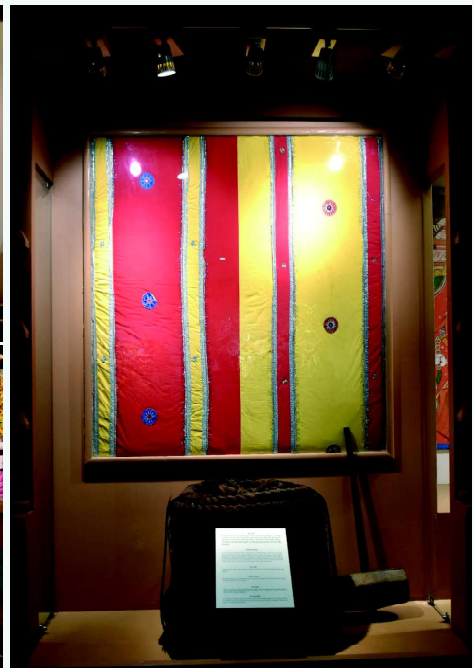
“Odisha Crafts Museum: Kala Bhoomi” seeks to showcase Odisha’s rich heritage on a global platform with an objective to preserve the heritage of Handicrafts & Handlooms of Odisha, reviving the fading traditions and promote research in this sector.

This museum showcases the tradition of rich handlooms and handicrafts craftsmanship of the State. The museum celebrates the craftsmanship of our artisans by displaying their breath-taking masterpieces. The museum is divided into two blocks (Handlooms & Handicrafts), a display area & live section. The display area consists of galleries while the live section is equipped with an Open-Air Theatre as well as separate workshop zones. The museum artefacts have been collected from each and every corner of the State.

At present nine galleries are open to visitors namely, Terracotta Gallery, Traditional Painting Gallery, Stone & Wood Carving Gallery, Metal Crafts Gallery, Natural Material Crafts Gallery, Pre-Weaving Technique Gallery, Tribal Crafts Gallery, Crafts of Shree Jagannath Culture Gallery and Handloom & Modern Gallery. The AV Room in the museum organises screening of movies on different crafts practised across the State.

The most highlighted and appreciated gallery of this museum is “**Crafts of Shree Jagannath Culture**”







Gallery. This gallery is inaugurated and open to the public on 1st April, 2022 by Hon'ble Chief Minister of Odisha, Shri Naveen Patnaik. Several rare artefacts, crafts, and handlooms related to Shree Jagannath Culture and photographs of many rituals are being showcased in the gallery. Handicrafts like Pipili Chandua, terracotta, pattachitra, sholapith and a large variety of brassware used in the Jagannath temple rituals, are being showcased. The gallery has been commissioned under active guidance of Shree Jagannath Temple Administration.

Similarly, some important *Beshas* of the Holy Trinity like Suna Besha (Golden attire), Badasinghara Besha, Hati Besha (Elephant attire), Padma Besha (Lotus attire), Nagarjuna Besha (Warrior attire) and Raghunatha Besha (Lord Rama in Royal Court attire of Jagannath) are also a part of the gallery. The rare Raghunath Besha of Lord Jagannath was held last time in the temple way back in 1905. Besides, exhibits on Mahari and Gotipua dances that are connected to the Jagannath Culture are a part of the gallery. Original used artefacts like Pattidiana, Chariot Fabrics and Chariot Rope, Fabrics of different rituals, brassware, toothpicks, prabha singhasana of trinity, and temple earthenware are also displayed in the gallery.

"The soul of India shines through the skilful hands of Odisha".

**-Naveen Patnaik
Chief Minister, Odisha**

Apart from this, illustration on Debasnana Purnima or Snana Yatra in Pattachitra style (of Odisha) along with Chapa Khela on murals at Temple Courtyard provides devotional vibes to visitors. The exquisite carving on monolithic Aruna Stambha (pillar) not only astonish visitors but is a precedence of magnificent artistic skill of artisans. The portraits of Ratha Yatra narrate the construction of Chariots and the depictions of Nabakalebara that explain from the selection of new wooden log to carving of Chaturddhamurti for worshipping in place of old idols.

Moreover the replica of 3 nos. of Ratha (Chariot) are displayed outside the gallery. Besides the used Chariot Wheel (Ratha Chaka) of Nandighosha Ratha is also displayed outside the gallery.

Looking from another angle, even on the advent of machine-made items, the temple has given preference to the use of handmade articles which can be deciphered as a great support to the artisans and weavers of the State. Some of these artisans have services (sebas) in the temple which is perhaps the reason of sustenance of crafts tradition here. Servitors are overly satisfied when they offer their best creations to the Lord. Undoubtedly, Shree Jagannatha Temple can also be considered as the confluence of the creativity of the artisans and weavers of the State who are lovingly called as Vishwakarmas.



Editor's Note



During the period from March to June, the world famous Car festival of Lord Jagannath along with elder brother Balabhadra and sister Subhadra at Puri is the most notable event in Odisha. Among the others, presentation of Odisha's budget, observation of birthdays of Bharat Ratna Babasaheb Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, Biju Patnaik, the legend, Maharaja Krushna Chandra Gajapati, the great social reformer and contributor, Dr. Sadashiba Tripathy, former Chief Minister of Odisha and freedom fighter, Utkal Gourab Madhusudan Das, the visionary, Dharanidhara Nayak Bhuyan, the martyred great revolutionary under the auspices of the I & PR department of Government of Odisha highlighted their contribution and paid homage to memory of the leaders.

As a significant step to provide a mighty impetus to the program of Mission Shakti the government of Odisha introduced direct international flights from Bhubaneswar to Dubai and Singapore and supported representatives of the program to participate in the showcase of Odisha's achievements at Dubai.

As a land of ancient culture, history, architecture and temples, Odisha holds a distinct place in the cultural heritage of India. The most famous among those is the temple of Lord Jagannath at Puri. Hinduism being the predominant religion, every year many different festivals are held all over India in which thousands of devotees visit different pilgrimage places. People go to different temples to see and worship the gods or goddesses inside the temple. But Odisha organizes such a special procession every year at Puri, in which the Lords come out of the sanctum sanctorum to give Darshan to the millions of people from all over the world and it is known as the Rath Yatra or Chariot festival. The congregation at Puri on this occasion is the largest in India or perhaps in the world. The Ratha Jatra is a much awaited event for participation.

It goes beyond a religion. The objective is to preach fraternity among the Indians and to spread peace, love and humanism across the world. It stands for coordination, convergence and commitment to peaceful coexistence in one world.

The festivities continue for over a period of ten days. It starts with the famous Ratha Jatra. Amidst the enthusiastic cries of "Jay Jagannath" rending the air together with the sounds of gongs, drums and other



musical instruments, Sri Jagannath proceeds to his destination, Gundicha Ghar, the birthplace (Janma Bedi) accompanied by his elder brother Balabhadra and younger sister Subhadra. Each riding their own chariots, the Grand Road (Badadanda) is filled to the brim during the time, each trying to pull the chariot along with the thousands. After a brief stay, on the ninth day, they come back. This is famous as the Bahuda Jatra, the return journey. On return, before alighting, the deities adorn with their golden jewellerys, described as the Sunabesha, the presentation of gold-adorned deities to the whole world before they are taken into the temple. For people of Puri, this period marks the coming of guests, celebrations and festivities.

The Temple has impact far beyond the state boundaries. That is why, our Chief Minister decided to provide the necessary input to change the appearance and facilities available at Puri through the implementation of heritage corridor project. The Puri Heritage Corridor Project was brought to transform the town into an international place of heritage. Puri will be a place to rest, contemplate, realize and feel happy to be in as only one modern city that thrives on tradition while progressing with modern facilities.

Around 10 lakh people gather at The Shrine of puri every year. That is why the state government, the district administration celebrate the Rath Yatra in a disciplined manner by preparing a detailed plan on health, law, discipline, movement, etc.

Having my native place on the Grand Road I was lucky to have witnessed the progress of the chariots from the safety of my home. My school and college days were spent in Puri. I remember clearly how my father used to buy Utkal Prasanga and to give it to me to update myself about the activities of the government and to increase knowledge about various aspects of our lives through the writings of eminent writers. Even today, the people of Puri eagerly wait for reading Utkal Prasanga and Odisha Review during Rath Jatra. Never did I dream that someday I will be carrying out the duties of the Editor of the two reputed publications. It has become a reality simply because I am fortunate to get the trust of my leader and our Chief Minister Sj. Naveen Patnaik.

For the publication of this special issue I owe my sincere gratitude to Hon'ble Chief Minister of Odisha, Hon'ble Minister, I & PR, Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Director and the entire team of I & PR. I would like to thank the esteemed writers and the officers and staff of Govt Printing Press. My job would have been impossible to complete without the tireless support of my colleagues. I apologize that due to the limitation of size and delay in receiving the article, we could not do justice to many articles.

On this occasion, let us all carry the message of peaceful coexistence, the world as one family and the greatness of liberal humanism to the world in pain and suffering.

Jay Jagannatha.

Editor, Odisha Review



Somavamsi rule in Odisha began so to say from the first half of the 10th century preceded by the influential Bhauma rule. Religious activities prior to Somavamsi rule was predominantly Buddhist Tantricism both in Samvalaka, the homeland of the Somavamsis and in Jajapura, their political Headquarters in the Central Odisha. The remarkable achievement of these rulers was the unification of the central part of Odisha with the eastern part of Dakshina Koshala that is almost the entire area that come under the western part of modern Odisha. Whether this unification was a gradual process beginning from Yayati-I and

hypothesis than verified theories, it will enhance our theoretical means to understand the situation under kings of succeeding dynasty such as Chodaganga and Anangabhima Deva-III.¹

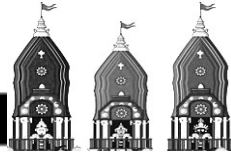
Traditionally Yayati-I is related in two ways with the religious activities at Puri such as: construction of first Purushottama temple and reinstallation of the deities being recovered from their concealment for 144 years after the invasion of Raktavahu. Archaeological evidences in Puri connect him with the place as the builder of ancient

Jagannath Worship Under Somavamsi Kings

Dr. Prafulla Kumar Rath

culminating during the rule of Yayati-II is secondary to be discussed here. So also is the difference of opinion on ascertaining the real Yayati who can be credited with most of the activities the region witnessed then. But the religious activities ascribed to these rulers are of prime interest for our discussion and Yayati-I will be referred to as the king who had initiated the synthesis. These rulers have left very little epigraphic records to provide us with information about their activities. H. Kulke has thus rightly said, although due to the lack of historical sources the study of this early and formative period of the Jagannatha worship will provide us more

Shiva temples around a hill on which was enshrined the Goddess Vimalaa and Uttaraayane. Other related connections include his patronage to Brahmanas and transformation of a place important for esoteric practices of Buddhist Tantrics into Brahmanical Shaktism through Vishnuism that he pioneered mostly in Jajapura region, his political Headquarters. However, leanings and patronization to Shaivism of the rulers of this dynasty remained unaltered and it reached the apex during the rule of later Somavamshees king Udyota Kesharee who is credited to have built the Lingaraaja temple in Bhubaneswar.



PATRONAGE TO BRAHMANAS

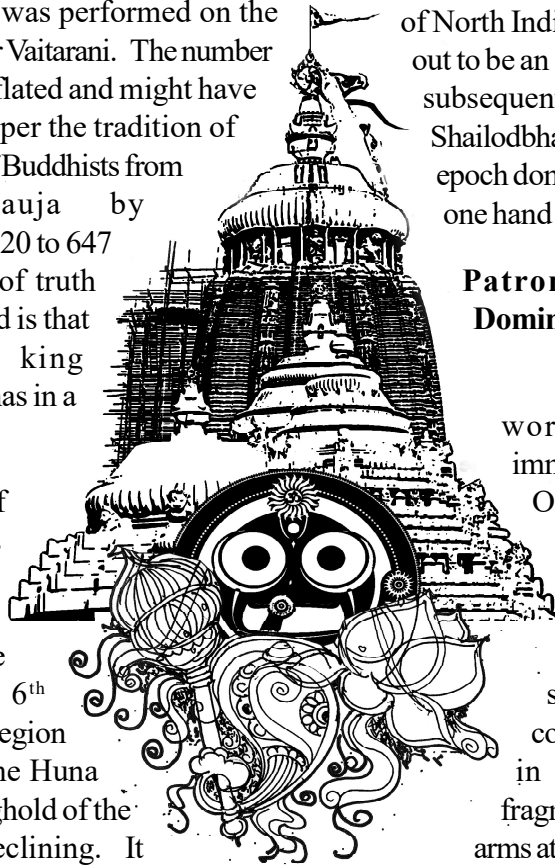
The most significant among his achievements was the re-establishment of Brahmanical dominance in places famous for Buddhist Tantricism for which the tradition reports that 10,000 Brahmanas were invited from Kannauja to settle in and around Jajapura and a tenfold horse sacrifice was performed on the southern bank of the river Vaitarani. The number may be exaggerated, inflated and might have most likely evolved as per the tradition of inviting equal number of Buddhists from the same Kannauja by Harsavardhana during 620 to 647 A.D. But the nucleus of truth which cannot be ignored is that this Somavamshee king patronized the Brahmanas in a much bigger scale.

Migration of Brahmanas to Odisha is associated with the serious unrest the community faced in the North India during 6th century A.D. when the region was confronted with the Huna invasions and the stronghold of the Guptas was rapidly declining. It continued for more than hundred years and the Buddhism had its second resurgence, now not only under royal patronage but due to popular acceptance. In the 7th century there was hegemony between kings like Harsa who had leanings towards Buddhism, Shashaanka a staunch Shaiva and Pulakeshin-II. And it is in the second half of this century that migration of Brahmanas from the north to Odisha is traced in

various inscriptions from both Uttara and Dakshina Toshaali ² and these immigrants belonging to various *Gotras* and *Charanas* received donations of tax free villages in order to permanently settle down in Odisha. In one case a group of 37 Brahmanas, out of whom some bear Vaishnava names, are mentioned as settling in a village in Dakshina Toshaali. Infiltration of North Indian traditions gradually turned out to be an important cultural factor in the subsequent period, especially during the Shailodbhava rule which gave to a cultural epoch dominated largely by Shaivism ³ in one hand and Vishnuism in the other.

Patronage to Brahmins and Dominance of Vishnuism

Existence of Vishnu worshippers among these immigrants especially in Northern Odisha and Prachi valley is attested by a few Vishnu images of the period. Two of these images are in the Bhadrak area on the northern side of the river Vaitarani consisting of a Narasimha image in Kaupur (8th century) ⁴ and fragments of an image with broken arms at Dolasahi identified as an image of Vishnu. ⁵ The Vishnu image extant in the village Mudugal in Kakatapur area together with a second such image belonging to Somavamsi period (11th century) is attributed to 7th century. This Vishnu image is having four arms with large halo, holding rosary and conch in upper hands, lower hands being rested on Chakrapurusha and Gadaadevee. Stylistically this image can be clearly linked to the fragment of Vishnu image in





Dolasahi (Bhadrak district) and the advanced stages of the same style may be seen at Monastery No. 1 in Ratnagiri (8th century).⁶ Sambhuyasa, a member of the apparently Brahmana family, ruled over Uttara Toshali⁷ in and around 580 A.D. is the insignia of the dominance of the Brahmana community in the northern part of Odisha during the period. Thus dominance of Brahmanas continued to grow during following years. Even Bhauma kings extended their patronage of Brahmanas.

In 930 A.D. the Rastrakuta king Govinda IV donated vast portion of his country to Brahmanas and temples. “Be it known to you that I who am maintaining grants to temples and agraharas (Brahmana villages free from taxation) and who day by day am issuing charters of villages, gave unto Brahmanas six hundred agraharas together with three lakhs of Suvarna (coins)... and granted to the temples for the enjoyment of the gods eight hundred villages, four lakhs of Suvarna.”⁸

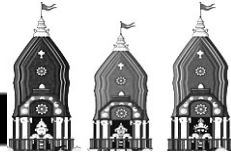
The Rastrakuta king Govinda IV who gave away 1400 villages and 7,00,000 Suvarna to Brahmanas and temples or at least reconfirmed earlier donations was one of the weakest rulers of this powerful dynasty.⁹ Apparently he tried to stabilize his weak power through appeasement of the hierocratic power of his empire. “It is obvious that the settlement of such large groups of Brahmanas especially in the centre of the regional kingdoms during the ‘heyday of political feudalism’ cannot be explained with purely religious arguments”.¹⁰ In the opinion of the scholar this royal patronage of Brahmanas that is establishment of systematic and large scale of settlements of the community was part of measures through which the dangerous feudal

forces were counterbalanced by ritual means.¹¹ Under such traditional policy Yayati-I also extended his patronage to Brahmanas not in hundreds, but in thousands. Thereby Shaivism flourished, Vishnuism gained momentum and Buddhist Tantric centres got transformed into centres of Shakti worship.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE EARLIEST PURUSHOTTAMA TEMPLE:

The tradition credits this king to have built the earliest Purushottama temple at Puri. Theoretically it is not in conflict with the historical development of religion in Odisha. Hence the tradition seems to be based on facts. But we do not have significant proof in its favour. During the period of 160 years of their rule neither Purushottama, nor Jagannatha, nor a temple of Maadhava, nor any other Vishnu temple was ever mentioned in Somavamsi inscriptions.¹² The undated Kaladindi grant of the eastern Chalukya king Rajaraja-I in its introductory verse describes Brahma as born from the lotus which emerged from the navel of the great lord Naaraayana Purushottama at Shreedhaama.¹³ Basing upon the Nagpur inscription¹⁴ and Pujaripali inscription¹⁵ the scholar concludes that there existed a famous Purushottama temple in Puri during the Somavamsi rule, which was widely known since the middle of the 11th century.¹⁶ The scholar has discussed the aspect of the tradition, attributing the construction of the earliest Purushottama temple in Puri to both Yayati I and Yayati II, has concluded that it was the former who built the first temple. His conclusions are based on the following reasons:

- The Maihar inscription, though uncertain is its date (being assigned to middle of



the 10th century on paleographical grounds – a method of dating often proved to be unreliable) need not be disregarded.

- Sufficient time is to be allowed for the temple to gain name and fame.
- Remnants of a temple of early Somavamsi style exist in Puri.
- The temple built by Yayati-I would be naturally old enough to have been in a state of decay by the beginning of the 12th century when Chodaganga built a new one.

Unfortunately none of the unequivocal reference to Purushottama in Puri in other literary sources is earlier to Yayati-II.¹⁷ Even then it is more possible that Yayati-I built a temple for Purushottama around 949 A.D. In that case how a cult which just reached the temple level could become popular in distant place like Maihar in almost the same period remains a question. Similarly when many Somavamsi temples of the period are existing up to our time, Yayati's temple decaying within 160 years may be possible but very unlikely. However, in the absence of reliable non-epigraphic literary sources prior to the middle of the 11th century, as long as Murari's date is not satisfactorily proved to be earlier, the only basis of attributing the Purushottama temple to Yayati-I are the few considerations as mentioned above, of which the decay of the temple in the beginning of the 12th century is the strongest argument.¹⁸

In the Dasagoba plates of Rajaraja Deva it is recorded that Ananta Varman Chodagangadeva built the present temple after

pulling down the earlier one which was in highly dilapidated condition being neglected by earlier kings. That Chodaganga concentrated his interest in the cult of Puri is testified from his two inscriptions, incised in a gap of one year between the two, now extant fitted to Nrusimha temple within the compound of the great temple and Markandayesvara temple.

Recovery of displaced images

Maadala Paanji, the temple chronicle, is the only work of last part of 16th century, that gives credit to Yayati Kesari to have built a temple for the Puri God and its mention is as follows:

“There upon Kesaris became the chief king. The first in the lineage was Yayati Kesari. This king was an eminent warrior and a great bestower. In the 11th *Anka* i.e. in his 9th regnal year the king asked the Sannyasis, Brahmacharis and Brahmanas the whereabouts of Shree Jagannaatha, the overlord of Odisha. They answered, quite a good number of years have lapsed, when Moguls invaded, the sea soared high inundating a large part of the place. It is not known to us where they have hidden the Paramesvara, the lord of Lords, somewhere in the Sonapur area beneath the ground. On hearing this the king went to Sonapur and asked the Khandayatras (local militia cum feudatory rulers) about the deities who informed that they do not know exactly but their forefathers have told them this to be the God's banyan tree. The deities were kept hidden under the ground here. This being known the king brought Brahmana cutters to pull down the tree and got the place dug. The deities were found. The images thus remaining buried for an inordinately long period were severely damaged. So the king kept the image carefully in sealed bags



being wrapped by worthy cloths. Thereafter he sent for the Daitas and Patis. Daitas were then staying in Biribandha and Patis in the border of Ratanpur. On getting them, in full conformity of canonical prescriptions he built new beautiful images, engaged more number of servitors. The number of tree cutting Brahmanas belonging to *Batsasa* lineage was increased to ten from five. Daitas belonging to *Uluka Gotra* were engaged to look after the safety of images. He also built a temple at Puri highing 38 cubits and enshrined the Paramesvara. This happened in his 13th *Anka* i.e. eleventh regnal year, *Kakada* (July-August) 25th day.¹⁹

The editor has quoted from a second manuscript of the Panji “After this the king started building a temple to be of 38 cubits height. After completion of the building Paramesvara was installed. This was done on 25th day of *Mesha* (April-May) in his 59th *Anka*. This king ruled for 68 years in 84 *Ankas*. ”

However both the scripts agree on the following points:

- i) Yayati Kesari went to “Sunupura” (Sonepura), discovered the images from under the ground, rebuilt new images, also a temple (at Puri) and enshrined the deities. Thereby he was conferred upon the title: Second Indradyumna.
- ii) The height of the said temple was 38 cubits.

The scripts disagree on the following points:

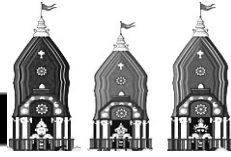
- i) The first script mentions the king to have led his expedition to discover the deities in his 9th regnal year and two years after he completed the

construction of a high temple, images and consecrated the images within the said temple. He ruled for 57 years. The second script informs that *Paramesvara* was installed in his 59 *Anka* and ruled for 68 years.

- ii) The consecration was performed in the month of *Kakada* 25th day (around August 10th) where as the 2nd script speaks the day to be May 10th. (approximately)

At least 125 years earlier to A.B. Mohanty’s attempt to edit the Panji Andrew Sterling had collected a script of the Panji and perused that in his work titled “An Account of Orissa Proper” and got it published in the “Journal of Asiatic Research” in 1825 A.D. He regarded the rule of Kesharee dynasty as the commencement of the real history of the province and has opined that this dynasty started ruling Odisha from 473 A.D. Further he had candidly admitted that nothing is known about the origin and details of the dynasty. Yet Yayati was the founder who was a brave and able warrior and successfully exterminated the Moguls. He had his capital at Jajapura where he built a palace and a fort named Choudwara. He died in 520 AD. Recovering the images and installing them is the most significant event during his rule. Yayati reinstalled the deities in his 13th regnal year i.e. 486 AD. The other opinion about the time of Yayati is said to be 922 to 955 A.D.²¹ basing upon the episode of Raktavahu invading Puri during rule of one Sovanadeva identified with Subhakara Deva of Bhouma dynasty.

Bhoumas were primarily non-Vaishnavas, rather Buddhists who had no or extremely insignificant role in the origin and development of the worship of Purushottama-Vishnu for which



Puri was famous. Yayati-I built a temple of Purushottama in Puri though he recovered the image of “Jagannaatha” in Panji language. It is not unnatural, but seems impossible. Somavamsis must have conquered this region after 934 A.D.²²

Madala Panji informs that the height of the earlier temple built by Yayati was 38 cubits (57 feet). It virtually surpassed the height of the Muktesvara temple in Bhubaneswara, the tallest temple of the region then, by 20 feet. Difference in height as noted above suggests Yayati-I to have actually built the temple. But if the Madala Panji record is relied upon the entire description conclusively inform that Jajati recovered the wooden images of Jagannaatha, Balabhadra and Subhadra. And also it emphatically says that this king was conferred with a name such as ‘Indradyumna’. This also happened with Ramachandra Deva of Bhoi dynasty who re-enshrined the images which were taken away from the temple by Kalapahad.

Why the succeeding kings neglected the shrine ?

There can be two possibilities. Either the shrine was not important for their religious objectives or the temple in reality was no way connected with their dynasty. The later Somavamsi kings were, in spite of their tolerance and support to various religious faiths and pantheons, more inclined to Saivism. That is why they might have neglected the Puri temple wherein Vishnu-Purushottama was enshrined.

Puri under Somavamsi rule that is by 10th century became a flourishing Shaiva Shakta Pitha with several Shiva temples with two female deities on the hill and with Saptamatrukas installed near Markandayesvara. A temple of Purushottama (or

Nilamadhava), the location of which is not certain, was probably built in the initial period of Somavamsi rule. It was neglected.²³ In the same line of argument Jajapur which rose to prominence was also neglected by the later kings of the same dynasty and Bhubaneswara as a Shaiva Kshetra became the most benefitted one.

The legendary account of the temple chronicle about Yayati Keshari remains of great importance for the study of the political aspect of the Jagannatha worship.²⁴ The scholar has rightly said that the Madala Panji tradition remarkably speaks of the strong relationship of Jagannatha worship with Western Odisha even though it was compiled at a much later period in 1600 AD when the knowledge about the origin of the Somavamsis from South Kosala in Western Odisha had already become faint in public memory. It is equally true that the alleged “rediscovery” of Jagannatha images and priests might, therefore, well reveal an even stronger influence of the Somavamsis on the early Jagannatha worship in Puri than usually assumed.

But certain is that Purushottama, Balabhadra and Sudarshana were popular deities then and worship of the former was no doubt prevalent in Puri even before Yayati –I. Only it is to be seen whether he built the first Purushottama temple or an earlier temple was existing by his time. Similarly details of Purushottama is to be found out about his iconography, his image was wooden or stone and whether he in reality revived a cult that once went underground and what was that cult. Raktavahu, if identified with Govinda-III, invaded the land. Followers of the cult enmasse left the place along with their venerated deities to a distant place like Sonepur and it could not revive for a long period seems possible



provided Govinda-III was not only the exterminator of the followers of the cult but also founded a different cult, may be the Purushottama cult. The combat was so grave, the disaster was so severe and foundation of the new cult at Puri was so firmly rooted that it did not allow the earlier cult to reappear for a considerable time span. Under this presumption what can be that new cult which flourished under the aegis of the legendary Raktavahu? Was it the Purushottama worship under Brahmanical order?

The account of the temple chronicle indicates about wooden gods and their cult Yayati-I revived. Thereby Raktavahu founded the Purushottama worship under Brahmanical order – is a stronger possibility. The undertone of Raktavahu episode has tremendous semblance with the Indradyumna episode of later period.

- (a) A king from a foreign land launches invasion.
- (b) Enshrined deity/deities disappear – wooden gods.
- (c) A deity of new cult appears – Nrusimha Purushottama
- (d) The original cult deities are again brought back – either rebuilt in Sonapur or rebuilt from the wooden log that came ashore in the sea from an unknown destination.

This has the following similarity with the early Indradyumna episode too.

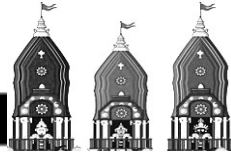
- (a) Emissary of Indradyumna comes to Viswavasva Savara who was worshipping Neelamadhaba may be made of stone.
- (b) The deity disappears.

- (c) He again appears being given the form built of wood.

Yayati-I initiated Brahmanisation in a much larger scale, built a number of Siva temples, developed a quite good number of Tirthas at Jajapura within his mission to transform the Buddhist Tantric centre into Brahmanical order through Shaktism. In Puri are extant quite a few number of ancient Siva Temples built during Somavamsi period, may be during the reign of Yayati-I. Thereby like Viraja in Jajapura Vimala too became a Shakta goddess at Puri.

In course of time Somavamsi rulers became staunch Saivas yet their leanings towards Brahmanical order weakened and Catholicism can be marked in the religious attitudes of kings of this dynasty especially when Udyota Kesari ascended the throne. He built the great Saiva temple at Bhubaneswara and also extended patronage to Jainas in Khandagiri. Therefore it can be presumed that some succeeding rulers of the dynasty might have revived the cult, which went underground, in Puri, and this cult was not necessarily of Brahmanical order and also may be the cult of the wooden gods. This revival has been attributed to a King like Yayati who was famous for his religious activities and his name and fame remained alive in the public memory even in the advent of seventeenth century. But it cannot be understood how the original form of the deities were rightly remembered when new images were built at the time of revival, if at all such a revival happened after a lapse of almost one hundred and fifty years.

Brahmana settlements have come up in considerable number around Puri town from 15th century onwards under donation by vast landed property. Thereby villages with inhabitants

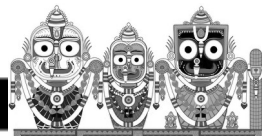


belonging to various non-Brahmana castes have come up. Out of these villages some have well built Siva temples of Rekha order. The economic and social dependency between Brahmana and non-Brahmana communities is quite remarkable. This must have led to cultural exchange. Even then the tradition of worshipping an autochthonous deity through her stone symbol identified with some goddess whose name is not known in Brahmanical order, is continuing in our present time. These deities are generally installed under a big tree. In recent days masonry structures are coming up and a Niragnika Brahmana has been engaged with the duty of daily worship. Brahmanical Puja rituals contain a systematic description of the form of the deity. So for all these deities in Brahmanical order have been assigned with special *mantras* through which they are invoked, meditated upon, and *upacharas* are offered. But in cases of the deities belonging to the other category no such specific *mantra* is framed. In almost all such cases *Banadurga mantra* as mentioned in *Durgotsava Chandrika* (16th century work) is applied in the rituals. In spite of constant contact with Brahmanas the religious tradition, hither to not known in scriptures, still exists. It can be construed that by the time of Yayati Buddhism and Jainism must have thrived among the mass especially when the Buddhist Tantricism was flourishing in the previous centuries. Therefore the so called displaced cult at Puri cannot be Tribal one, it can be Buddhist or Jaina also.

Predominance of Buddhist Tantricism along with the emergence of Sahajayana and Kalachakrayana which originated in Sonepur area and spread throughout Odisha taken into consideration may be it also existed in Puri and this may be the cult which went underground due to a military setback, could not revive due to

dominance of cult of antagonistic order, might have been revived by any one of the succeeding Somavamsi rulers in post-Yayati period. Under this hypothesis (1) Construction of earlier Purushottama temple (2) Transformation of Tantric Vimala into the fold of Brahmanical Shaktism and further revival of the old cult – all are attributed to Yayati, the most illustrious king of the Soma dynasty.

The Raktavahu episode associating Yayati with the cult has the significant aspect regarding the shifting of the deity or deities to Sonepur area where the images were kept hidden for long 144 years. This could have actually occurred only under one probable situation in which a different cult was established by the victorious invader and during the following period the followers of the displaced cult would have not tried to regain their seat. This invasion happened during Bhoulakara rule and heyday of Buddhist Tantricism. It is certain that Bhoulakaras were having their dominance in Prachi valley, hardly 30 Kilometers away from Puri. Buddhist activities were undertaken in that area. The Vidyarthi Damodara of Maihar seems to have come to visit Purushottama of Brahmana pantheon. Thus it can be safely presumed that Purushottama was installed in Puri by the legendary Raktavahu in early 8th century and the displaced cult was Buddhist Tantricism. Unfortunately we have no substantiating evidence in favour of the proposition. In spite of our inability in finding strong evidences it will be equally unjust to ignore the tradition as it strongly indicates a re-installation of the image or images. The peculiar icons today placed within the temple suggest with definiteness that on some point of history the present images took the place of earlier enshrined image.



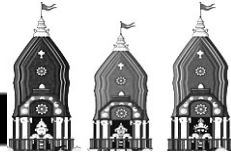
In support of the proposition noted above, that Yayati-I built a temple, rebuilt the images, enshrined them in their original place after recovering them from a far distant place, may be through the experts of the cult being invited from that area, logical conclusions can be deduced. The victorious king was free to select for his royal patronage of one or several out of the existing cults. Preference was given not only according to political opportunism but also to his own individual and dynastic religious traditions, thereby trying to find a cult which may correspond to both the religious and political intentions. Thus it was prerogative of the selecting ruler while elevating the cult through patronage to be influenced and guided in an appropriate way of complementing his political and religious objectives. The Purushottama cult, let us accept, satisfied all the preconditions for the victorious Somavamsis. All these steps were taken not in the original area of his kingship, i.e. Sonapur-Boudh area, but in the heart land of his newly conquered kingdom. Further selecting Puri for the purpose, instead of Jajapura which was by that time a “Tirtha” of all India importance, a Shakti pitha of good reputation where already the autochthonous deity has been Hinduized, the cult has been elevated to temple level and place with much more historical importance than Puri virtually needs more in depth study. Even Yayati ignored Bhubaneswara where already a tradition of temple building was well founded for more than three hundred years anterior to his time and was the epicenter of political activities during the last 1000 years from Asoka and Kharavela.

Presuming Yayati to have selected an autochthonous cult to satisfy and pacify the local population, the goal could not be satisfactorily achieved if the cult which he patronized belonged

to a different region instead was a local one. Hence the autochthonous cult was of Puri and was having some historical link or relations with Sonapur area which is to be further investigated.

History of religious activities of Yayati indicates a different picture. In Jajapura where he wanted to diminish the influence and dominance of Buddhist – Tantrics engaged in esoteric practices then by introducing Brahmanical order into Viraja cult. He did not tamper the image but transformed the Tantric centre into a Shakti Pitha. Similarly he selected Puri then a Tantra pitha and made it a Shakti Pitha of Vimala. Like Jajapura a set of Saptamatruka images is extant in Puri. Thus possibility of existence of two non-Brahmanical cults, one centering Vimala and other may be with the Triad of present day form, is strongly suggested. Also among the said Trinity one was Jagannatha and others were Subhadra and Balabhadra – a must for the proposition. So also was existing Narasimha – Purushottama during the rule of Yayati-I. He also built some Saiva temples at Puri.

Yayati introduced Brahmanism to diminish the Buddhist influence. Purushottama cult was by then extant in Puri and was also very popular. Existence of this cult was helpful for Yayati to expedite the process of synthesis which best suited to his *modus operandi* in Jajapura. It was establishment of coherent relationship between Vishnuism and Shaktism. The episode of Gayasura, the process of elevation of the Nabhigaya to remarkable stature as the place of paying oblation to ancestors, did not include Puri rather preferred Mahendragiri. Hence inter-association between Shaktism and Vishnuism in Puri had to take a different form where Vimala-Bhairavi and Jagannatha Bhairava started



changing their status. Like Jajapura Jagannatha – Bhairava was not present through his image. He was in the other autochthonous cult which was worshipped in a Trinity. So it was easier to combine non existing Jagannatha Bhairava with the Jagannatha of the group of deities worshipped by Buddhist. Sahajayana and Kalchakrayana followers Bhairava-Jagannatha had nothing to do with Purushottama-Nrusimha or Purushottama-Vishnu.

The second cult was of dominating Tantrics who were worshipping Vimala-Bhairavi with a post and Jagannatha-Bhairava, non extant in any iconic form was changed to a Shakti or Mother goddess for which Vishnuism was to be utilized as it was so experimented in Jajapura.

The third cult was Purushottama-Vishnu where Purushottama was equated with Nrusimha and presiding deity was Lakshmi-Nrusimha. In Jajapura Varaha had to be enshrined but in Puri that sort of necessity did not arise due to presence of Nrusimha. In a way Brahmanisation in Puri was much easier and less cumbersome on the part of Yayati-I. Thus there was no need of performing a sacrifice in the line that was organized in Jajpur. It may be possible that the followers of all the three cults were exhausted and tired due to serious cultic animosity that continued for a long period. Thus it was an opportunity for Yayati-I to synthesize all the three cults into one that we know today as the Jagannatha cult. In the model of synthesis as prepared here Vimala was the central deity where now stands the great temple with a post as her representative. Yayati built Yamesvara, Kapalamochan and Markandayesvara temples etc. to enshrine Siva, an essential requisite to transform Vimala Bhairavi to Sakta goddess.

The synthesis which began by Yayati-I reached its summit under Ganga rulers who could bring a virtual compromise between the followers of three cults. Actually Vimala and Nrusimha were then converted as integral part of Brahmanism. Acceptance of the Triad within Brahmanism was the problem, which was easily solved by interpreting on the Triad as Vishnu, Shakti and Siva. The tradition of reoffering the naivedya of Jagannatha to Vimala – and all other goddesses throughout Odisha has got its origin within this synthesis. Importance of Narasimha is retained when the Triad remains away from the sanctum.

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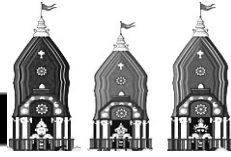
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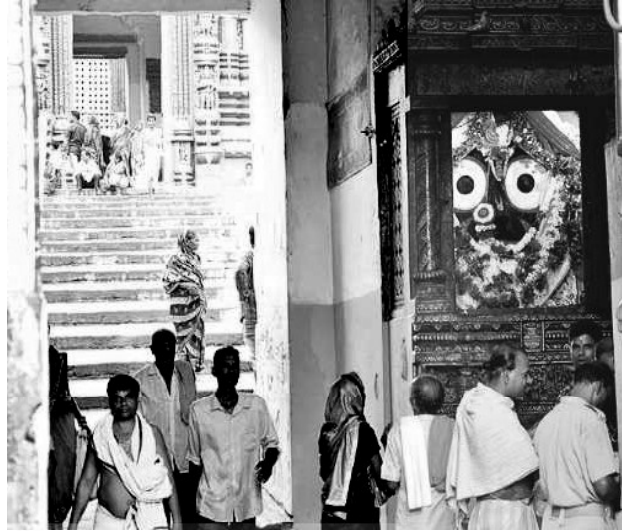
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The oldest Sanskruti in the Universe is the Jagannath Sanskruti which is based on the “Sanatan Dharma” and the ruling God of this Sanskruti is Lord Jagannath. The culture and tradition of this Sanskruti are based on the rituals and festivals associated with Mahaprabhu Shree Jagannath. So this unique culture of Odisha state is known as Jagannath Sanskruti.

Considered as the oldest Sanskruti, Jagannath Sanskruti believes in Sanatan Dharma which means all are equal in the eyes of the Almighty and God is omnipresent. During the annual Rath Yatra, Lord Jagannath gives his



The Significance of Baisi Pahacha in Sri Jagannath Temple, Puri

Dr. Bishal Das

Darshan to the devotees who assemble from all over the world. This Sanskruti believes in “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” which means the whole world is our family. This is observed in Jagannath Dham, Puri where thousands of devotees from across the globe gather to participate in the most prominent festival, the annual Rath Yatra or the Car Festival. The Jagannath Sanskruti is based on the culture & rituals of Lord Jagannath of Puri. As per Purans and Sastras Lord Jagannath is established in Puri by the king Indradyumna in Satya Yuga so this culture is the oldest in the world.

Puri Jagannath Temple is well known for its unique culture. Every place, activity, and ritual practiced in the temple has some essence within it. Sri Jagannath, the Lord of the Universe is the apostle of humanism and Lord Jagannath’s culture is the culture of universal brotherhood, love, tolerance, equality, and fraternity. The culture of Jagannath is not a sectarian religion but a cosmopolitan philosophy.

The Jagannath culture has embraced all types of spiritual thought starting from primitive Savara tribal to ultra-modern Krishna



consciousness. It has given solace to all devotees hailing from the so-called untouchable low caste, Islam, Jainism, Sikhism, and even Christianity. Jagannath Cult is a pleasant synthesis of Vaishnavism, Saktism, Saivism, and other sects of Hinduism.

Baisi Pahacha is a combination of two words 'Baisi' and 'Pahacha'. In local Odia language 'Baisi' means '22' and 'Pahacha' means 'Step', so 'Baisi Pahacha' means '22 Steps'. These 22 steps are located at the 'Simha Dwara', the Lion's gate of Lord Jagannath temple. As per Vastu Shastra, the Eastern Gate is the most energetic place than the other gates. After entering the Lions' gate of the temple, devotees have to climb these 22 holy steps to reach the second inner gate (known as Baisi Pahacha Gumuta) and after passing the second gate they will reach the courtyard from where they can enter into the main temple to see Lord Jagannath. Although the exact time of its construction is not mentioned anywhere in historical or *Puranic* texts, legends say that it was built by a king named Bhanudev.

According to belief, all sins of the devotees disappear who touch these steps even once, so devotees usually touch these 22 steps in hand while climbing them and also allowed their children to slowly roll over these steps from the top to the bottom in expectation of spiritual bliss. Pilgrims get a sense of fulfilment after putting a fleck of dust from the surface of these 22 steps on their forehead.

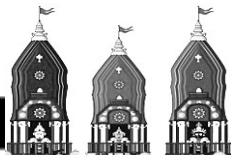
Width of the middle 15 steps varies from 5 feet 10 inches to 6 feet 3 inches and the rise is 6 inches to 7 inches. The size of the remaining 7 steps is smaller in length and width. A black colour stone known as 'Yama Shila' is engraved in the middle of the 3rd step. As per the belief, devotees

must step on this stone while going up the steps because it frees them from 'Yama Danda' (Punishment of Yama, the God of death), 'but must not step on this stone on their way back since it will take away all the 'Punya' (values collected after visiting Lord Jagannath temple).

Various holy activities and rituals are performed on these 22 steps throughout the year. Out of those, 'Shraddha' ritual is the most significant one. Shraddha is the annual Pinda Daana ritual of Hindus, a ritual in which food is offered to the ancestors, is usually performed on both sides of these 22 steps. The ancestral souls are believed to be satisfied by it.

There is a small stone on the 7th step known as 'Pitru Shila'. Devotees offer Anna Mahaprasad, the holy rice of the temple that has been offered to Lord Jagannath, to this stone for feeding their ancestors to liberate their departed souls. It is also believed that during the annual car festival several Gods, Goddesses, Demi Gods, other heavenly bodies, the souls of the ancestors (near the Pitru Shila), Chitragupta and Yamadootas (near the Yama Shila) come to these steps to see the grand Pahandi ceremony of Lord Jagannath. Madana Mohana, the representative idol of Lord Jagannath, offers Pinda Daana on these steps to his ancestors (Nanda and Yashoda, Devaki and Vasudeva, Koushalya and Dasaratha).

Another ritual known as 'Badabadia Daka' (call the elders) is performed on these steps on the day of Deepavali. Devotees burn *kaunria kathis* (bundle of a particular kind of sticks which easily catch fire) on these steps on the Deepavali day to light up the path of their ancestral souls. The idols of Kasi Biswanath, Lord Rama,



Nrusingha and Ganesha have been installed on the southern side of the Baisipahacha.

During the annual Rath Yatra the presiding deities of Sri Jagannath Temple, Lord Jagannath, along with His siblings Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra and Sudarsana are taken out of the sanctum sanctorum in a royal procession called 'Pahandi Bije' amidst beating of cymbals, gongs and drums, sound of conch blowing and chanting of their names by devotees. They go to their respective chariots through Pata Agana, Ananda Bazaar, Inner Lions' Gate, Baisi Pahacha, Lions' Gate, Gumuti and Arunastambha.

Various interpretations associated with 22 steps

First Interpretation

As per Yogashastra, a man possesses five types of *mana* and 25 types of *prakrti*. Out of these 25 *prakrti*, three are *Apara* and 22 are *Para prakrti*. The 22 *para prakrti* are:

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------------|
| 1) Kama | 2) Sambhoga |
| 3) Keli | 4) Lova |
| 5) Sancaya | 6) Kosa or panjikarna |
| 7) Abamaya | 8) Himsa |
| 9) Ersa | 10) Kisunata |
| 11) Kapata | 12) Mithya |
| 13) Ghma | 14) Ninda |
| 15) Ajnata | 16) Krodha |
| 17) Raga | 18) Dvesa |
| 19) Ahankar | 20) Mada or parba |
| 21) Utkantha | 22) Maithuna |

A devotee has to cross twenty two *para prakrti* to see the lord.

Second Interpretation

Baikuntha, the abode of Lord Vishnu is situated above *sapta lokas*, *sapta patala* and *ashta baikunth*. These are as follows:

Sapta Lokas

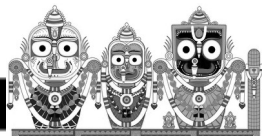
- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1) Bhu loka | 2) Bhubaha loka |
| 3) Svaha loka | 4) Maha loka |
| 5) Jana loka | 6) Tapa loka |
| 7) Satya loka | |

Sapta Talas

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| 1) Atal | 2) Satal |
| 3) Bitat | 4) Talatala |
| 5) Mahatala | 6) Rasatala |
| 7) Patala | |

Ashta Baikunth

- 1) Sri baikuntha
- 2) Kaibalya baikuntha
- 3) Karanamaba baikuntha
- 4) Sesaasai baikuntha
- 5) Svetadeep baikuntha
- 6) Parabyoma baikuntha
- 7) Garbhodaka sai baikuntha
- 8) Kailasa baikuntha



One has to cross Seven Loka, Seven Patala and Eight Baikuntha and hence these are symbolically represented as 22 steps.

Third Interpretation

The twenty two steps symbolises the Panca Matra, Pancha Bhuta, Panca Vija, Panca Deva and Jiva and Parama.

Fourth Interpretation:

‘Baisi Pahacha’ symbolises twenty two tirthas of Shrimad Bhagbat with ten GOD namely Basudeva, Narayana, Madan-mohan, Ram-Krsna, Sridevi, Bhudevi, Bimala, Bhubanesvari, Pancarasa Asta Sattika Bhaba, Tribija, Tribija and 12) Triguna. Therefore, calculating all these are represented in 22 steps.

Fifth Interpretation

- First five steps describe all five sense organs i.e eye, ear, nose, tongue and skin.
- Second five steps represent five breathing prana. Those are up-breathing (prana), down-breathing (apana), back-breathing (vyana), out-breathing (udana), and on-breathing (samana).
- Third five steps describe the inner beauty i.e. looks (rupa), aesthetics (rasa), taste (swad), smell (gandha) and noise (sabda).
- Fourth five steps are for pancamahabhutas that include earth, water, fire, air and space.
- Twenty first step is for wisdom.
- Twenty second step is for ego.
- After crossing each of these steps, a pilgrim can get a darshan of the Lord Jagannath.

Sixth Interpretation

According to Bhagvata purana, there are twenty four Avataras of Lord Vishnu. Out of these twenty two are considered most important and these in the form of steps symbolises for salvation. These are:

Caturasana, Narada, Varaha, Matsya, Yajna, Nara-Narayana, Kapila, Dattatreya, Prsnigarbha, Rsabha, Prithu, Narasimha, Kurama, Dhanvantari, Mohini, Vamana, Parasurama, Rama, Vyasa, Balarama, Krsna, Kalki.

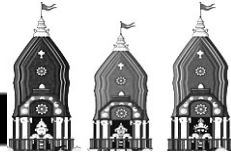
According to popular belief, all sins of the pilgrims disappear when they touch these steps even once.

Seventh Interpretation

As per Jainism, these twenty two steps of Puri temple represent Twenty Two Tirthankars out of twenty four. The other Two Tirthankars are represented through the Ratnavedi of the temple and the Grand Road or Badadanda of Puri. When a Jain devotee enters the temple and starts climbing these holy steps, he touches each step with deep reverence.

Conclusion

These twenty two steps highly revered by devotees are believed to possess spiritual animation. In various bhajans and hymns dedicated to Lord Jagannath, these steps are described as the place where one can examine himself and affirms his faith in the Lord of Universe or Lord Jagannath. A devotee gets a sense of fulfilment, if he trustingly puts on his forehead a speck of dust from the surface of the steps. The Baisi Pahacha or the flight of twenty-two steps inside the complex of Shree Jagannath Temple is considered



not only an important part of the temple but also plays a significant role in the life of the devotees.

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My Driver

Prabhat Kumar Sahoo

Every morning, I lit up incense stick
Before the Lord Jagannath on my car,
Murmur a few words,
"You are the master
And I am your driver, my Lord !"

Soon after the prayer
I feel quite wally, nervy,
A question resonate within
"Who is the driver,
Am I or is He ?"

My weary body and soul
Lay on the bed at the end of evening
All of a sudden in darkness



I hear somebody in trance
Patting my soul saying
"I am your driver,
Driver of the whole Universe, my dear !"

This console me to calm,
Feel quite secured,
My vacuous intellect bow down
Once again till the Sun knock me at door.

Prabhat Kumar Sahoo, Plot No.316, Baramunda, Bhubaneswar-751003.



As per description in the Puranas, Among the twelve Yatras of Darubrahma (wooden manifestation) Shree Jagannath, Car Festival or Shree Gundicha Yatra is considered the most famous one.

Those who get a glimpse of Shree Balabhadra, the incarnation of Sankarshana (Lord Shiva), Shree Jagannatha, the incarnation of Bamana-Vishnu, Devi Subhadra, the incarnation of Lord Brahma, the



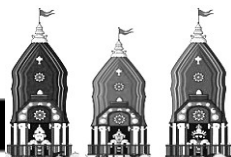
Shree Gundicha Yatra of Lord Shree Jagannath

*Susanta Kumar Dash
Dr. Bhaskar Mishra*

creator and giver of incessant bliss and Shree Sudarshana the powerful vehicle of Lord Vishnu in the Gundicha Temple-bound chariots would definitely be liberated from earthly bondage.

According to Bamadev Samhita those who can witness the four deities on the Simhasana (the sacred seat) of Gundicha Temple for a week, they along with their ancestors would get a place in the heavenly abode i.e. Baikuntha for all time to come. As per this text those who can hear about this great festival they also get the desired result. Besides this, those who study the rituals of the divine festival and make others aware of the same they can also get a place in His holy abode.

As per the Purana and religious texts the Car Festival of the “Four Deities” takes place on the 2nd lunar day of the bright fortnight of Ashadha for the over-all well-being of the mankind. In the Skanda Purana it has been described that no festival of Mahaprabhu is more important than that of the Car Festival. Because Shree Hari the supreme Lord of the cosmos rides His chariot in a very delightful mood to the Gundicha Temple to fulfil His pledged command. Gods and Goddesses also come to witness the sportive art of the Lords. One who touches the holy shade of the chariot can be absolved from grave sins including the sin of slaying a Brahmin.



Further sages and rishis are of the opinion that those who witness the Car Festival of the Darumaya (wooden manifestation) Brahma (progenitor) they get the result of Aswamedha Yajna (horse-sacrifice ritual).

Although the concept of chariot is prevalent since Vedic days the car festival of Shree Jagannath has given a new impetus to the traditional cultural flavor of the mass festival and has transformed the Vedic ethos 'to that of the universal.

As the chariot is a symbol of "sandhini sakti" mere touch of the chariot would confer compassion of Lord Jagannatha on the devotees.

The famous verse in this context is as follows :

"Rathe tu Vamanam drustva punarjanma na vidyate".

Rituals of Shree Gundicha Festival :

After the completion of morning rituals of the deities such as Mangal Alati, Abakash , Ballabha, Khechedi etc. on the 2nd day of Asadha Sukla tithi the "Mangalarpana ritual" is performed. The four deities come in a Pahandi (ceremonial procession) and board the sacred chariots one after the other. However, on their way to the chariots during the Pahandi a tahia (headgear made of sola and sacred leaves) is tied on the fore-head of each deity. The deities namely Lord Sudarshana, Devi Subhadra, Lord Balabhadra, Lord Jagannatha come serially in Pahandi and board their chariots. After the Pahandi the proxy

divinities (bije pratima) such as Rama and Krushna are placed by the Mahajana servitors on the chariots i.e. Taladhwaja and Madanamohan on the Nandighosha chariot respectively.

Chhera Pahmara Ritual (Mopping the Chariots by Gajapati by Golden Broom) :

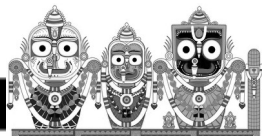
After boarding of the deities in their respective chariots the deities are decorted with Malachula and Vesha on the chariot. The Chhera



Pahmara (mopping the chariots in a golden broom) ritual is performed by the Gajapati, the foremost servitor of the deities. For performing Chhera Pahmara the Gajapati Maharaj is brought in a ceremonial procession by a Tamjan (palanquin) from the

Shree Nahara (King's palace). He first halts in front of the Taladhwaja chariot and climbs the chariot of Lord Balabhadra. Other servitors of the palace such as Nahara Puspalka, Behera Karan, Deulakaran, Rajguru, Lenka, Mekapa, Garabadu, Muduli etc. remain present on the chariot. Throughout the procession Behera Khuntia acts as an usher to lead Gajapati by waving a cane. The Garabadu servitor hands over hatuani to the Gajapati and he then gives floral offering to the deity. Gajapati offers camphor lamp in a golden diya (lamp) to the deity. This is followed by alata and chamara ritual.

Rajguru receives the golden broom from Muduli servitor and hands it over to the Gajapati after performing a ritual namely samskara. Bhandar Mekap (another servitor) gently sprinkles white flower around the chariot. The



King sweeps around the chariot by the golden broom and thereafter sprays sandal paste on the chariot. Chhera Pahmara in other chariots such as Devidalana and Nandighosha are done respectively. After the Chhera Pahmara Gajapati goes back to Shree Nahara in a procession. It is worth mentioning that Mudiratha performs the Chhera Pahmara in the absence of Gajapati.

Ratha Tana (Pulling of Chariots) :

As per tradition, after the Chhera pahmara the Bhoi sevaks remove the charamala from the chariots. Each chariot is tied with four wooden idols of horses. Rupakara servitors are given the responsibility of tying the wooden horses with the chariots. Four long ropes are tied in each of the chariots. The girth of the rope is 8 inch and the length is 220 ft.

The Kahalia servitor blows kahali (wind-instrument). This is followed by beating of gongs. Thereafter the chariots are pulled. Ratha Dahuka (the jester-like minstrel) sings many songs to enthuse the crowd to pull the chariots enthusiastically. The area gets vibrated with chanting of “Haribol” and “Jaya Jagannatha”. With beating of gongs, chanting of devotional slogans and samkirtana the chariots are pulled towards the Shree Gundicha Temple which is situated at a distance of three Kms.

Usually the chariots reach the Gundicha Temple on the same day of Car festival. But on some occasions the chariots do not reach the destination because of some difficulties such as – delay in Pahandi, snapping of ropes, movement of chariots in wrong direction etc. At the time of pulling of chariots Pankti Bhoga (dry sacred food) are offered in honour of the deities on both sides of the grand road. Daitapati servitors and other servitors concerned perform sacred service to the deities remaining on the chariots.

The Collector and District Magistrate, Superintendent of Police and Additional District Magistrate of the district usually remain in charge of Nandighosha, Taladhwaja and Debadalan respectively. Other officers of Temple and the District Administration remain present at the time of pulling up of the chariots and render necessary co-operation. However, the servitors like Ratha Maharana and Bhoi Sevak discharge important responsibility during the time of pulling of chariots.

Ratha Bhoga :

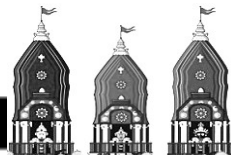
The deities on the chariots are offered dry sacred food instead of cooked rice. From Gopalaballabha ritual till Badasinghara ritual Khai, Kora, and different types of fruits are offered to the deities. Mahasuara servitors serve the bhogas on three different chariots. Puja-panda servitors perform puja on the chariots.

According to Record of Rights earlier different types of sweets such as Kakara, Pheni, Khai, Kora, Jhademeda, Mandua etc. in large quantities were offered as bhoga to the deities on the chariots. But for last many years fruits and other bhoga with certain quantities are offered to the deities.

Appearance on the Adapa Mandap (simhasana) at Gundicha Temple :

After the three chariots reaching Gundicha Temple, the Temple and District Administration in discussion with Daita servitors carry the deities on the following day in Pahandi to the simhasana of Gundicha Temple. Before this the Kothasuansia servitors perform simhasan majana and fix charmala on the adapa mandapa.

The proxy divinities of Madan Mohana and Rama-Krushna are taken by Mahajana servitors inside the Gundicha Temple. These deities are kept in Dakshini Ghara (a special room



in the south) in the temple premises. Thereafter the deities such as Lord Sudarshana, Lord Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra and Lord Jagannatha are taken serially by Daitapatis in Pahandi (ceremonial procession) to the simhasana inside Gundicha Temple. During the said Pahandi, Pratihari Sevak holding Gouri veta (a type of cane) moves with the deities for their protection. All rituals similar to that of Shree Mandira are performed in the Shree Gundicha Temple during the seven-day stay of the deities in the said temple.

Hera Panchami :

Hera Panchami is an important festive occasion during the car festival. On the 5th day of Asadha Sukla (full moon phase) Hera panchami is celebrated.

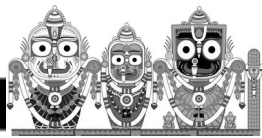
As per the Record of Rights, the “Paliaa Mahajana” servitors of Goddess Lakshmi perform Majana in the storehouse (bhandara ghara) of Shree Mandira on the said day. After the majana, Goddess Lakshmi is dressed in Vanaka Lagi and Patta (silk) saree. She wears other ornaments. She is worshipped by Pujapanda. Goddess Lakshmi appears in a bimana (a vertical palanquin) that is kept under the banyan tree inside the temple. The Bimanbadu servitors carry the bimana on their shoulders in a procession to the chariot of Lord Jagannatha near Gundicha Temple. Pati Mahapatra servitors perform certain rituals such as Prasada lagi, Bandapana, Chamara, Alata, Ghasa, Bidia & Dahi Pati. In the meantime the mid-day puja for the four deities in the Gundicha Temple gets completed and they are offered aalati. Lord Jagannatha takes his celestial bath in panchamruta (sacred purified water mixed with milk, curd, ghee, honey and jiggery).

After the evening puja (Sandhya dhupa) certain rituals near the chariot take place and Mahalakshmi comes to Jaya-Bijaya dwara (door). Ajnamala (divine garland) from the holy body of Lord Shree Jagannatha is brought and offered to Lakshmi and specific rituals are performed. The Bimana of Goddess Lakshmi is kept near “ Nakachana dwara” (the exit door). Here the Bhitarchha Mahapatra servitors receive Hatuani from the Garabadu servitors. They offer lamp and perform Dahipati manohi.

After this ritual, on her return journey Lakshmi in her palanquin proceeds to the chariot of Shree Jagannatha. She out of veiled anger breaks a piece of wooden fixture in the chariot of Shree Jagannatha and comes back to Shree Mandir via Heragohari Sahi. For the sacred to and fro journey of Goddess Lakshmi special Pankti Bhoga is offered at Bada danda, Heragohari Sahi and at different Mathas. Then the celebration of Hera Panchami comes to an end.

Dakshina Moda (Turning the chariots facing the south) :

As per tradition, after the Sakala dhupa (morning worship) on the following day of Hera Panchami the Ajnamala (divine garland) from the three deities are brought and are given to the three respective Palia Puja Panda servitors. They proceed to the chariots in a procession with gong, parasol and wind instrument and offer the Ajnamala. Thereafter the three chariots of the deities take south turn and are kept near Nakachana gate. The chariots are thoroughly checked by traditional Maharana (carpenter), Darji (Tailor), Bhoi servitors near the Nakachana dwara. If required necessary repair work on the chariots is taken up.



Sandhya Darshan (Evening Darshan) :

As described in the Puranas getting a glimpse of the four deities on the Adapa Mandap during the evening (sandhya darshana) brings incessant bliss to a devotee. As described in Niladri Mahodaya seeing the deities continuously for 10 years in Nilachala (Shree Mandira) is equivalent to witness the deities for one day only at Adapa Mandapa at Gundicha Temple. Especially, if one sees the deities during evening/night hours gets ten times more than the desired results. The following shloka justifies the same.

“Niladrau Dasha Varshani Adapa – Mandape Dine”

The “Sandhya Darshana” ritual is performed on the day before Bahuda Yatra (Return Car Festival) since ancient days.

As some special rituals are observed on the 9th lunar day of Sukla Asadha the entry of the devotees to Gundicha Temple is restricted after 8 P.M. on the said day.

The timing of Sandhya Darshana is shown in the time-table published by the Temple Administration. After the completion of “Badasinghara” ritual, on the said day, Palia servitors cover the face of the deities with Gita Govinda Khandua saree and leave Gundicha Temple. The Kotha suansia servitors fix a charamala (a flight of stairs made up of logs of palm & coconut tree) on the simhasana and the Daitapati servitors perform “Bahutakanti” and other secret rituals.

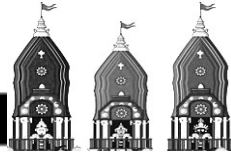
Bahuda Yatra (Return Car Festival) :

The return car festival is known as “Dakshinabhimukhi Yatra” (movement of chariot towards south). The 8th verse of Chapter 35 of the “Skanda Purana” speaks about the “Dakshinabhimukhi Yatra”.

As per description in the Purana, devotees can get the same desired result by witnessing the deities while on this “Dakshinabhimukhi Yatra” as on the “Uttarabhimukhi Yatra” (movement of chariot towards north). In the morning of Return Car Festival (Bahuda), the Bhittarchha and Palia servitors perform Mangala Aalati, Abakasha rituals. Thereafter the Puja Panda servitors perform Gopala Ballabha, and Sakala Dhupa etc. The rituals are followed by Senapata Lagi ritual (secret ritual) by Daitapati. The Pujapanda, Pati Mohapatra and Mudiratha servitors perform Mangalarpana ritual in the three chariots. The return car festival commences soon after blowing of Bije Kahali (victory bugle). When the three chariots are on their way back to Shree Mandira on Bahuda Yatra different institutions, temples and servitors offer (pankti bhoga) dry special food to the deities.

A special type of cake (Poda Pitha) is offered to the deities when the chariots halt at Mausimaa Mandir. Thereafter the chariots of Balabhadra (Taladhwaja) and Subhadra (Darpadalana) proceed further and are stationed in front of Singhadwara. But the chariot (Nandighosha) of Shree Jagannatha halts at Shree-nahara. Goddess Lakshmi is carried in a palanquin to Shree-nahara and Dahipati ritual is performed there. Gajapati himself facilitates the meeting of Goddess Lakshmi with Shree Jagannatha. Receiving the divine garland from Shree Jagannatha, Goddess Lakshmi enters the Shree mandira. Chariot of Lord Jagannatha is pulled up to Singhadwara thereafter.

Getting a glimpse of the deities on the south-ward journey during Bahuda gives incessant bliss and removes all sins and afflictions.



Sunabesha (Golden Adornment of Deities) on Ashadha Sukla Ekadasi (11th day of bright moon phase) :

During the last phase of the Gundicha Yatra (Car Festival) the deities are adorned with gold ornaments on the chariots in front of the Lions Gate on the Sukla Ekadasi and the general public witness the deities. The deities are adorned with varieties of gold ornaments such as Sri Payara, Kirita, Kundala, Adakani, Kadambamali, Harida Mali, Sebati Mali, Chandrika etc. A sea of humanity floods Bada danda to witness the majestic sunabesha of the deities. Adequate police arrangements are made to maintain law and order during Sunabesha.

Adhara Pana :

On Aashadha Sukla Dwadashi (12th day of bright moon phase) Adhara Pana (a special type of drink in which cheese, milk, sugar, spices are mixed) is offered to the deities on the chariots. This sweet flavoured milk drink is kept in earthen pots which almost touch the lips of the deities. Mahasuara servitors prepare the drinks on each chariot. At the time of offering of “Adhara Pana” Bhittarachha, Taluchha and Palia Puspalka hold a new cloth (in horizontal way) in front of the deities.

Pani Apata servitors collectively bring hundred pots of water from a well (near Lions gate) and pour the same in a big brass container (Handa) which is kept there on the chariot. The Mahasuara servitors mix milk, cheese, banana, spices etc. in the said water and prepare a special drink (pana). Pujapanda servitors offer the said drink to the deities. It is said that after offering of “pana” to the deities on the chariots, the servitors break the earthen containers in honour of the side deities. As per tradition “Bada Odia Matha”,

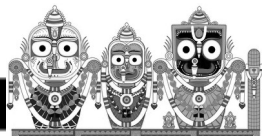
“Raghava Das Matha” and Temple Administration supply the pots and ingredients for preparation of the said drink “Pana”.

Niladri Bijie :

Niladri bijie is a special event i.e. the last phase of Shree Gundicha Yatra. After the “Adhara Pana” ritual the four deities return to the bejeweled platform in a ceremonial procession on the thirteenth day of the bright fortnight of Aashadha. Appearance of the deities on the bejeweled platform after the Bahuda Yatra is known as Niladri Bijie.

The journey of chariot from the citadel of splendid divinity of Neelachala (Shree Mandira) to the citadel of sensuous sweetness, the Maharasa Vedit, said to be in Sundarachal or Gupta Brundavana (Gundicha Temple) and back to Neelachala is reminiscent of Lord Krishna’s mundane sport. He leaves Gopa and comes to Brundavana to initiate His Maharasa. Gundicha Jatra is therefore highly symbolic.

On the day of Niladri bijie after the Sandhya Dhupa, charamalas are fixed to each of the three chariots. Mudiratha sevaks give floral offering (Puspanjali) to the deities on Taladhwaja, Nandighosha and Darpadalana respectively and complete the “doralagi” ritual. Kahalia sevaks blow a wind-instrument (bugle) and the ceremonial procession (Pahandi) of the deities starts. The proxy divinities such as Rama, Krishna from Taladhwaja and Madan Mohan from Nandighosh are taken in a pahandi by Mahajan servitors to Dakshini ghara inside the temple premises. Lord Sudarshana after completion of certain rituals is taken from Devadalana chariot. In a ceremonial procession He is taken to the bejeweled platform through Baisi Pahacha (twenty



two steps), Ananda bazaar, Sata Pahacha (seven-steps) and Jagamohan. Similarly the pahandi of Shree Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra takes place. Finally the sovereign of the cosmos Shree Jagannatha goes in a spectacular pahandi. When Lord Jagannatha reaches on the chara of Nandighosha, Goddess Lakshmi appears on a Dambaru (a special musical instrument) which is kept on a holy bed. The Mahajana servitors install the deity on the said Dambaru at Bheta Mandap. The Tahia (an ornamental headgear made up of bamboo stick, sola flower etc.) given by Raghabdas Matha is tied on the fore-head of Shree Jagannatha. The patimahapatra servitors offer sandal paste, dhandi Prasad, Camphor Alati, Durbakshata, Bandapana, Dahipati, Ghasa, Bidia to the deities. Bhitarchha Mahapatra offers sacred lamp to Goddess Lakshmi. But Lakshmi who is in a sulk gives direction for closing the main gate (Lions gate) of the temple. However, when Lord Jagannatha appears in front of the Lions Gate, it gets opened.

Shree Jagannatha is brought to Jagamohana through Baisi Pahacha, Ananda bazaar, Bhitara Bedha (inner courtyard) and Sata pahacha. Goddess Lakshmi out of anger closes the Jaya-Bijaya door. She becomes furious because Lord Jagannatha did not allow her to accompany Him on His chariot-ride. A tug of war breaks out between the Devadasi (women servitors) on behalf of Lakshmi and Badagrahi Daitas and other Daitapati on behalf of Lord Jagannatha. Lord Jagannatha assures Goddess Lakshmi that in future this type of mistake /

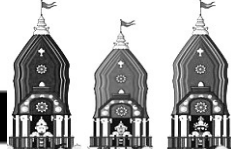
situation will never occur. Thereafter the Jaya-Bijay doors get opened. At last near the storehouse Lord Jagannatha looks to the north and similarly Goddess Lakshmi looks to the south. In such a position both exchange their looks. The Bhitarchha servitors untie the nuptial knot and offers bandapana (lamp offering). In order to pacify the Goddess, Rasagolas (a special type wet sweet made up of cheese, sugar, spices) are offered. It is only on the day of Niladri Bijie Rasagolas are offered to the deities in ShreeMandira. The deities are enthroned on the bejeweled platform and the Daitas and Patimahapatra offer sandal paste to the deities. The Kothasuansia servitors remove charamala from the bejeweled platform. In this way Niladri bijie celebration comes to an end.

Car Festival in Puri is considered one of world's largest religious festivals which is being celebrated since time immemorial. The Holy Trinity is considered as the friend, philosopher and guide of the people of the State. Jagannatha Temple is one of the most revered temples of the country and Nabakalebara is the grandest of all festivals of Lord Jagannatha. Multitude of pilgrims from across the world throng to Puri to be a part of the world famous Gundicha Yatra and to witness the sportive art of the Lord of the cosmos.

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“He is the eye of all eyes, the nose of all noses, the ear of all ears. He is the Lord of ever-changing cosmos. The Lord of the universe or jagat, is Jagannath.”

- Prajnanananda Paramahansa

Puri’s famous Jagannath Temple holds a prominent place of importance for devotees. The Lord of the universe-Jagannath is, the great deity of the Hindu



Unity in Diversity: Uniqueness of Puri’s Jagannath Temple & Significance of Rath Yatra

Dr. Pramodini Jena

pantheon, the redeemer of the fallen, Patitapabana. He is also recognised by a variety of names and honorary titles, each of which represents a different facet of the limitless Godhead. Puri in Odisha, recognised as one of the four pilgrim centres for any devout Hindu, worships the Lord in a unique way. The Lord is worshipped not with His consort, but with His elder brother Balabhadra and younger sister Subhadra, who are ensconced on the Ratnavedi, the sanctum sanctorum inside a magnificent temple. Such a trinity has never been worshipped in the history of Hindu religious ceremony.

The Puranas and other Sanskrit texts refer to this holy city of Puri as Nilachala, Nilagiri, Niladri, Purusottam Kshetra, Srikshestra and Sankha Kshetra. It is also known as Jagannath Dham and is one among the four Dhams of India. The other three Dhams are Dwarikanath, Badrinath and Rameswaram. Puri has a large number of smaller temples and Mathas. It has a salubrious climate and attracts tourist from all over the world round the year and particularly during the summer months. Puri has one of the finest beaches of the world and the house of numerous Odia Craftsman and exquisite handicrafts of a large variety.

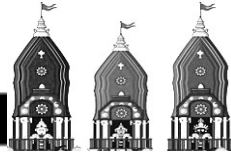


The magnificent 12th century shrine of Shree Jagannath Temple is located in the Holy town of Puri on the Bay of Bengal coast. The town religiously identified as Shreekshestra is one of the four cardinal centers (Chaar Dhaams) for the devout Hindus. A unique thing to notice about the idols is that they are made of neem wood (*Azadirachta indica*). Therefore, the deities are also known as 'Daru Brahma' (Daru means wood; Brahma Means the divine life force present within the wood). According to Jagannath Dharma Shastra, the deities are made out of new wood (darus) to replace the old deities at intervals of eight to nineteen years. A deeply sacred divine object called 'Brahma Vastu', the imperishable one, is transferred from the naval part of each old deity to the naval part of each new deity. This is symbolization of the— that the body is perishable, while the 'Atma' is imperishable. Puri is among the most visited tourist destinations in the world. The best attraction is the unique car festival "Rath Yatra", sojourn of the Lords to their maternal home Shree Gundicha Temple during the month of Asadha (June/ July) every year.

Here during centuries of tolerated but stagnant life, the Shaivites, Vaishnavism, Tantricians, Shaktas, Ganapatyas, etc had shed their angularity and gradually came to assimilate a common type, finally gathering themselves under the shadow of living and humanized God – Jagannath. Puri has risen as a teertha with pan-Indian character since the early 12th century A.D, as the ceremonial royalization of the divine Lord Jagannath has increased. It was during 12th century A.D, that the temple town Puri might have assumed the greatest prominence under the rule of Imperial Ganges (1078 – 1435 A.D). Shree Jagannath worship was renewed and reached its climax particularly with the Bhakti movement of

Shree Chaitanya. From the first part of 16th century, the pilgrim influx to Puri grew and it became the epicentre of Vaishnava culture in the whole of eastern India. Rituals like Nagar Kirtan praised the medium for popularization of Jagannath culture and penetrated deep in to the heart and mind of the principle of Prema Bhakti or devotion by love was only the way to attain Mukti and became the culture spread over Odisha. He is considered as a manifestation of the Supreme being. He is occupying a pivotal position in the religious life of Hindu - world, and it is admitted that His culture, in the present form, has clear message for the Indian people. In the senses the Jagannath cult can be described as a form of transcendental secularism for the fact that many individual religious faiths appear to have been transcended and synthesized in it. The Jagannath cult is more than an amalgam of Buddhism, Jainism, Saivism, and Vaishnavism, etc. Thus, it is that the influences of various sects on Jagannath cult and discernible clearly "Jagannath has welcomed all and embraced all."

As per the practice followed from time immemorial, not all devotees would be allowed to have a 'darshan' of the deities, leave aside worshipping them within the temple. History records that many ardent devotees were denied entry on the basis of their religious faith and nature of worship. But the Lord is always overjoyed to be with His devotees, and no man-made ritual can stop Him. The Lord and His brother and sister come out of the portals of the temple to the open space – the grand road and mount the wooden chariots assigned to each. The chariots bear distinct names and are erected on different set of wooden wheels. Even the colours of the linen covering the top of each chariot is distinct, and a viewer can tell the deity inside the chariot from



the colour of the material draping the chariot from a considerable distance.

Intriguing Mysteries in Shree Jagannath Temple of Puri

Aside from these facts, Puri's Jagannath Mandir is also recognised for certain mysteries that defy logical explanation. People think that these mysteries are Lord Jagannath's blessings. One needs to visit this place to believe it.

The temple flag that defies logic

The flag atop the temple strangely always floats in the opposite direction of wind. The flag flying in the opposite direction halts your logical thinking, and you start to realise that there is some energy greater than science.

The Sudarshan Chakra-

The chakra is actually 20 ft high and weighs a ton. It is attached to the shrine. But what's amazing about this chakra is that you can see it from any place in Puri. The engineering mystery behind the placing and positioning of chakra is still a mystery because irrespective of your position, you can always feel that the chakra is facing toward you.

No planes, no birds fly above the temple-

One will be surprised to know that no birds or planes fly above the temple. In contrast, such a feature is uncommon in any other shrine in India. Actually, the place is a no-fly zone that has been declared by some divine law rather than any state power. This phenomenon also apparently has no explanation. It still remains a mystery.

The temple structure

The temple structure is such that this does not cast any shadows at any time of day. It is still

unknown if it is an architectural marvel or a miracle that can only be attributed to divine energy.

The Sea Mystery of Puri

In any part of the world, you must have witnessed that during daytime, the wind from sea comes to the land, whereas the wind from the land blows toward sea at evening. However, the geographical rules are also reversed in Puri. Here, just the opposite thing happens.

An 1800-year-old ritual

Every day a priest climbs atop the temple, which is as tall as 45 storey building, to change the flag. This ceremony has been practised for over 1800 years. If this rite is not performed, the temple will be closed for the following 18 years.

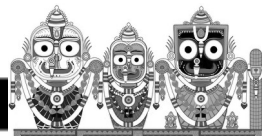
Mystery of Mahaprasad

Nothing goes wasted in Jagannath Temple. Depending on the day, between 2,000 and 20,000 worshipers visit the shrine. However, the amount of prasadam cooked in the temple remains constant throughout the year. Nonetheless, prasadam is never wasted or insufficient on any single day.

Significance of Rath Yatra

The Rath Yatra or chariot festival is celebrated in honour of Lord Jagannath who is one of the ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu in Hindu mythology. The Rath Yatra event celebrates and glorifies Lord Jagannath's annual journey with his brother Balabhadra and sister Subhadra from his sacred temple located in Puri to visit his aunt's temple located in Gundicha.

The deities are pulled by the countless devotees and brought to sacred Gundicha temple, situated on the other extreme of the grand road. The crowd becomes swelled as the day enters



into the afternoon hours. Besides from enthusiastic worshipers of all castes and faiths, the parade includes a retinue of servants, eager visitors, helpers from various religious sects, paramedics, officers in plain cloth and even uniformed police, and many more.

The chariots for sojourn of deities to Gundicha Temple are made new every year with logs from different kinds of indigenous trees, namely *Anogeissus latifolia* (Dhaura), *Anogeissus acuminata* (phasi), *Erythrina variegata* (paladhua), *Bombax ceiba* (Simili), *Gmelina arborea* (Gambhari), *Lannea Coromandelica* (Moi), *Neolamarckia cadamba* (kadamba), *Poliaithia longifolia* (Debadaru), *Glochidion Zeylanicum* (Kalachua), *Terminalia alta* (Asana), etc. Lord's life cycle speaks of the life cycle of every living organism in nature's forest ecosystem. If we go by legends and folklores, the Lord himself chose the Purusottama Kshetra of Odisha. Viswvasu, used to worship Him as Nila Madhava in the thick forests of interior Odisha. As on to-day the descendants of Viswvasu, famously known as Daitapatis, continue to play significant role in His worshiping rituals as much as the Brahmin priests of Puri. And this is where the specialty of Jagannath worship stands out as typical and without a parallel in the religious history of India.

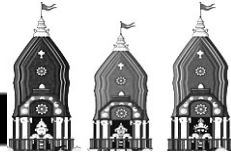
There have been other Gods worshipped in different states and regions of India but none of them is so much essentially tied up with the religious and cultural life of that region as is the case with Jagannath and Odisha where, in sharp contrast, this is a conspicuous exception. Odisha's dharma is Jagannath Dharma, Odisha's culture is Jagannath Culture, and even the history of Odisha is largely the history of Lord Jagannath. But despite all this, Lord Jagannath cannot be said to be the

Lord of Odisha exclusively. He is the Lord of the Universe- Jagannatha, natha of the jagata.

Pahandi is a formal and elaborate procession that brings the Chaturddhamurti out of the temple. The holy chariots are swept with majestic formality and ceremoniousness by the Gajapati of Puri after the Pahandi. Jagannath is resting for a week after arriving at his aunt's home in Gundicha. For a week, the devotees pay their obeisance and bring offerings to him. The Bahuda, or return of Jagannath to his home temple in Puri, takes about a week. The Rath Yatra event lasts nine days, during which worshippers adore their god and sing and dance for him. Brahmans are fed, and alms and charity are given to the destitute.

This is a chariot festival. Three separate chariots are prepared with unique structures and technical design specifications. Nandighosha is the chariot of Lord Jagannath. It is a towering mammoth creation almost like a skyscraper with eighteen wheels. Taladhvaja is the chariot of Balabhadra. It is a massive artistic work, yet it is smaller in size than Lord Jagannath, and it has sixteen wheels. Subhadra's chariot is Devadalana. It, too, is a towering construct, but it is smaller than the other two and has fourteen wheels.

Aside from its deep religious sanctity, spiritual appeal, and aesthetic beauty, the Car Festival has a deep-rooted influence on Odisha's socio-cultural traditions. As a matter of fact, the festival symbolises confluence of all religions; for the presiding deity of the Car Festival; various religious sects like the Saivas Shaktas, the Vaishnavas, the Ganapatyas, the tribals, the Buddhists, the Jains and the Muslims alike are nonetheless but the sons and daughters of the same Almighty.



The festival is a universal one. Here the untouchables, the social outcast, the downtrodden mingle together with the so-called upper caste on Badadanda. The system of Chhera – panhara done by the successive Gajapati Kings of Odisha remind us of Rajadharma for the service of God and man. Thus, the concept that king as the first among the equals gets strengthened.

One of the most unique features of the festival lies in the presence of brothers and sister in the car. The love and affection of the elders for the younger sister is typically presented in the festival. Rightly it has been mentioned, “Of all Hindu shrines, the temple of Jagannath (Lord of Universe) in Odisha is undoubtedly the most famous.”

The Rath Yatra represents a life journey with family members. The god’s emergence from the temple represents his presence among ordinary folks on Earth. It is a lesson that God is present in our hearts and minds and is manifest among us only. Thus, we must respect and honour each other. The pulling of the divine chariot by congregations of devotees signifies the united force of human beings. It illustrates how the power of God can be transmitted to man and how by collective efforts man can reach God. It also instils

the value of unity, plurality and brotherhood on earth. It is a time of joy, feasting, merrymaking and devotion. The air is filled with happiness, and people’s hearts are at rest. Thus, this celebration highlights our incredible India’s unity in diversity.

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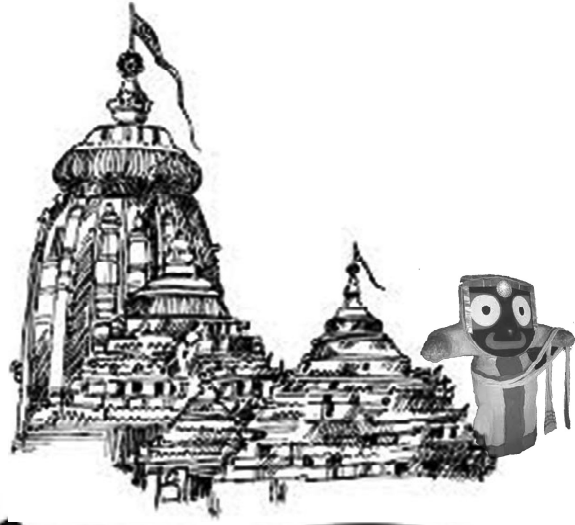
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The temple of Purushottama-Jagannatha stands with an enclosure abutting on the main road, surrounded by two lines of walls built of laterite. The external dimensions of the outer wall are 665 ft. by 640 ft.: it is not uniformly high, the height varying from 20 ft. to 24 ft.¹ The outer wall possesses four doorways in four cardinal directions having different names, viz., the *Simhadvara* on the east, *Hastidvara* on the north, *Asvadvara* on the south and *Vyaghradvara* on the west.² It is the tallest temple of Odisha, rising to a height of 214 feet.



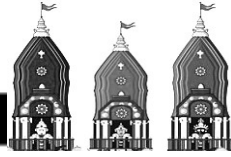
Art and Architecture of the Jagannath Temple

Kailash Chandra Dash

The temple has all the four component parts, such as, *Vimana*, *Jagamohana*, *Natamandira* and *Bhogamandapa*. Subsidiary shrines are added on all the three sides in the form of niches housing *Parsva-devatas* (guardian deities) such as *Trivikrama* on the north, *Narasimha* on the west and *Varaha* on the south. The *Vimana* and *Jagamohana* of the temple of Jagannatha stand to-day as the mute witness of the grand architectural passion of Chodaganga. In the construction of this stupendous temple the king earnestly followed the canons of the Kalinga temple of architecture. He had intense regard for

Odia life and culture and so he had probably employed the architects and the sculptors of Utkala who had gained sufficient knowledge from their predecessors on the constructional designs of the lofty structures. His aim was to popularise the worship of Vishnu-Purushottama in Odisha by making such a structure which would be the tallest one up to his period in Odisha and would overshadow the architectural master-pieces of the Somavamsi kings.³

The architectural and the sculptural features of this giant temple were hidden under a



thick coat of plaster for which it was called the White Pagoda.⁴ The temple of Jagannatha was declared a centrally protected monument in 1975 by the archaeological Survey of India. It has now become successful in removing the plaster from the main temple.

BADA

The *panchanga bada* (base) of the main temple is on a high platform (*pista*) which is designed in the shape of *Khakhara mundi* coming out in different projections from the *pancha-ratha* plan.⁵ The *panchanga bada* of the main temple is similar in design with that of *Krttivasa-Lingaraja* in Bhubaneswar. It has a five-fold vertical division such as *Pabhaga*, lower *Jangha*, *Bandhana*, upper *Jangha* and *Varanda*.⁶ The *Pabhaga* consists of five mouldings, namely *Khura*, *Kumbha*, *Pata*, *Kani* and *Vasanta*. The mouldings are connected by vertical bands. The *Khuras* have niches in the central facets capped by *Vajra-mundis*.⁷ The massive *Jangha* is divided by *Vandhana* consisting of three mouldings connected at places by vertical bands. Lower *Jangha* has *Khakhara mundis* in the *Kanika* and *Anuraha*. The upper *Jangha* has *pidha mundis*.

GANDI

Basically the plan of the *gandi* follows the programme of *Lingaraja* and *Brahmesvara*, although a slightly different *Silpasastra* had been used for the scheme. It is divided into four conventional parts, the *raha*, *anuratha*, *pratiratha* and *kanikapagas* with horizontal fret courses emphasized and vertical bends in level plans with very little off set between any two though essentially a *pancharatha* outline.⁸ A large *angasikhara* is carved in the flat portion and it is

above the *Verandah*. The flat portion of the *kanika* of the *Lingaraja* temple has no *angasikhara* and there is a continuation of the *bhumi-amala* in it. In the *Brahmesvara* temple an *anga-sikhara* is carved which is a part of the *kanika-paga*. The multiple *verandah* mouldings form the base of the *gandi*, but they do not demarcate the *vada* from the *gandi* which is a feature of the Odisha temple architecture.⁹ The *kanika* is wide, rounded and projecting.¹⁰ It is divided into ten *bhumis*.¹¹ Most of the *bhumi* divisions appear to be additionally sub-divided by a projecting ring which lacks ribs.¹² The *anuratha* has three *anga-sikharas* superimposed in a vertical alignment beginning at the level of the second *bhumi*.¹³ The first *bhumi* of the *raha* has a horizontal alignment of four *anga-sikharas* two on each side of the projecting motif of *Garuda* pouncing upon a crouching elephant which crowns the *vajra-mastaka* carved on the *veranda*. This is a new feature of the *Jagannatha* temple because in the *Brahmesvara* there is a large *anga-sikhara* in the *veranda* and in the *Lingaraja* the mouldings are left plain. The *amalaka* is supported by *Dopichha Simhas* at the corners and the image of *Garuda* above the *raha*.

JAGAMOHANA

The *Jagamohana* stands on a plinth of six feet and three inches in height.¹⁴ It is a *pancharatha pidha* temple and is modelled on that of *Lingaraja*. It is now under thick coats of plaster, but the over-all plan is visible. The *bada* is of five divisions. The *jangha* is divided by a single *bandhana*. There are *stambhas* in the *jangha* and between them in the lower *jangha* there are niches in the shape of miniature *pidha* shrines and above them appear *khakhara mundis*. In the upper *jangha* there is a *pidha*



shrine; in the lowest part of the wall in the *anuratha* portion below the *jangha* are four *stambhas* carved side by side. In the middle of the *stambhas* there is a miniature *pidha* shrine and above it there is a *khakhara mundi*. There are multiple *pidhas* piled up in the form of a pyramid above the section called *kanti*. The apex begins with *beki*, the *ghanta*, *amala*, a *kalasa*, a *khapuri* and the *ayudha Chakra*.

SCULPTURAL DECORATION

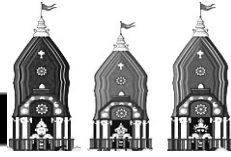
The main structure of the Jagannatha temple consisting of *Vimana* and *Jagamohana* presents an elaborate decorative programme which highlights its artistic significance. The decoration of the *bada* falls into two categories:

(I) relating to the icons, (II) relating to the decorative aspects.

The first category of sculptures include the representation of *parsva-devatas*, *parivara-devatas* and the various events connected with the life of Krsna-Visnu. The *parsva-devatas* like *Vamana*, *Narasimha*, *Varaha* are carved in the northern, western and the southern part. The corner *khakhara-mundis* contain seated figures of eight *dikpalas* while those of the *anuratha* have seated *Gurus* in a *sikshadana* pose. Of the eight *dik-palas* Indra, the guardian of the east, is missing now as the whole shrine found damaged and later on restored by the Archaeological Survey of India during the time of conservation.¹⁵ The sight of the *gocharana* of the *gopals* indicative of the early life of Krishna has been represented in the basement in the western side of the *bada*. In the southern wall in a niche of the upper *jangha* of the *anuratha*, the icon of *Kaliyadalana-Gopala* is sculptured. In the north wall in the upper *jangha* of the *anuratha* portion there is a

niche which contains the image of *Benu-Gopala* or *Benunatha*. Standing in flexion, Krishna is seen here playing on his flute. He is accompanied by *Gopis* on the two sides.

The upper *jangha* portion all around the temple exhibits the miniature *pidha deul* just above the *khakharamundi* of the *talajangha*. The front face of each *pidha deul* is occupied by figures of *Dasavatara* of Visnu.¹⁶ They are not serially found due to irreparable damage caused in the past.¹⁷ In the south-east corner *Balarama* is exhibited and in the north-west *Kalki* and *Buddha* are found intact. Numerous Visnu images have been carved in various forms in the niches of the *bada* which constitute an essential part of its decoration. These icons, both seated and standing, possess a type of serenity which is an important feature of the main deity Sri Purushottama. They are very expressive and their grave poses indicate the ghastly atmosphere of bloody battles. In the north wall, in a niche below the flat portion of *Kanika*, the icon of seated Visnu with four arms is carved. In the upper *jangha* in the *anuratha* of the same wall, there is a standing image with two hands. It may be identical with a *parivara-devata* connected with Visnu. There is a mutilated image of Vishnu in a niche of the upper *jangha* in the same side. In the *rahapaga* below the *veranda* in the two niches standing Visnu icons with four arms have been sculptured. There is also the icon of Narayana in a niche of the north wall. Lord Visnu seats on a pedestal with ease. He holds a lotus and club in his upper hands, a conch and a discus in his lower hands. Below his right legs are the *Vishnuganas* with hands in *anjali* pose. In the western side there are numerous Vishnu icons. The images of several Vishnu icons have also been carved in the south wall, but they are badly



damaged and beyond identification. On the horizontal surface of the *Pata*, scenes from Krishna's life, such as, Krishna lifting the Govardhana hill, killing the demon named Dhenukasura, playing with the *Gopis*, his journey to Mathura on the chariot have been depicted.¹⁸ The miniature *Khakharamundi* shrines of the *anuraha-paga* depict the king's court, the king being seated on a *simhasana*, accompanied by court ladies and courtiers, priest giving sermons to the devotees, gurus in a *sikshadana pose*.

(II) The decorative motifs of the *pista*, *bada* and *gandi* include fauna, flora, male and female figures, semi-divine beings such as *gandharvas*, *Yaksas* and *kinnaras*, *chaitya arches* and others. The best specimens of sculpture are the depiction of natural scenery. The Odia sculptor is reputed for his true representation of foliage, birds and other animals.¹⁹ The physical environment of Odisha with its wild forests supplies the inspiration for these motifs.²⁰ The variegated creepers, the different animals and birds furnish the various motifs of art in the walls of the temple. All available spaces in the walls and the basements have been occupied by this decoration indicating a love for pictorial art.

The creeper receives the great attention in the decorative programme of the wall. The creepers with human figures clinging to alternate sides decorate the sides of the niches, the basement and the *pista*. Various animals and the birds with creepers constitute a part of the decoration of the wall and are profusely available in the four sides of the giant *janghas* of the wall. Among the animals the elephants, the lions, the deers, the horses and the camels have been decorated in various parts of the wall. The *pista* is adorned with a series of elephants in a vicious

war procession. The panels of war elephants in a row form part of the decorative aspects of the *janghas* and the niches. The elephants, according to ancient Hindu tradition, are supposed to guard the four quarters.²¹ The practice of using the elephants as a decorative motif of the plinth of the temple had its origin in the conception.²² Like elephants horses with their riders in a war procession also constitute a part of the decoration of the wall. The lower portion of the *pista* contains the friezes of elephants, horses, camels and procession of warriors. Above this the remaining portion of the *pista* is decorated with scroll and floral designs and the top-most course of the *pista* is designed with the procession of horses and elephants. The cows, a great companion of Krishna, figure in the basement.

Figures of men and women in diverse poses constitute an important part of the decoration of the wall. Each of them is like a piece of love poem written on stone, which occurring alongside the serious scenes of religious significance, the stereotyped forms of cult images, provides a diversion and relief to the visitors.²³ The text of the *Silpaprakasa* illustrates sixteen types of female figures which decorate the temple walls and some of them are present in the Jagannatha temple.²⁴ In the recesses of the *jangha* we find the representation of such figures in various forms and poses like holding a baby, drawing an anklet from her left and drawing down towards her the branch of a tree. The exquisite forms of the *kanyas* add to the artistic vigour of the *bada*. Female attendants in the homes of the nobles and the kings have also been carved in the various niches of the walls. The figures of dancers and musicians, both male and female are also important part of the decorative programme of the wall. Such figures have been elegantly carved



in the rectangular niches of the leaf-like strip that joins the various divisions of the *pabhaga*. Besides there are decoration of the *ganas* and *vidyadharas* which very often flank the *pidha mundi*.

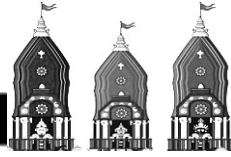
The motif of foliated arch constitutes a large part of the decoration. In this form known as *Bho* in Odisha terminology there is the *kirttimukha* with pearl strings issuing from its mouth which form themselves into concentric circles. Inside the inner most circle, the emblem of a flower or a human face or a bell is placed. This form of arch is decorated in the Jagannatha temple. In the *khakhara mundis* we find *kirttimukha* patterns are represented in a circular row with long pearl strings emanating from them. When these pearl strings are joined together, they make uniform paraboles. This motif is used on the sides of the *rahapaga* of the wall of the Lingaraja temple and is also extensively used on the pista of the Jagannatha temple.

As the temple was under a thick coat of plaster, the historians could not assess its artistic significance. But the occupation of the Utkala throne after the extirpation of the Somavamsi rule by Chodaganga was mostly appreciated by the important sections of the society of the time. A gigantic temple for Vishnu-Purushottama was a pressing need of the king for the legitimation of his power and was a great desire of the people for the consecration of Purushottama as the presiding deity in the Odisha religious thought sphere. Hence he got maximum co-operation from the artists and the sculptors of Utkala for his noble deed. No doubt the temple was gargantuan in structure but then it was accepted as a model to the other religious structures like Konarka and the Simhachalam of the Ganga period. We can conclude with the views of K.S.Behera: "With

exquisite carvings on the *bada*, the temple of Jagannatha is one of the most beautiful temples of Odisha. It is an important landmark in the progressive course of the evolution of the Odishan temple architecture.²⁵

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G.C.Chauley, "Different Aspects of Deplastering and Conservation of the Jagannatha Temple at Puri", *Krishna Pratibha (Studies in Indology, Prof. Krishna Chandra Panigrahi Commemoration Volume)*, Vol.I, p.181
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Unnata Prasadaraja pataka udai
Ye pradese samavartti pane nahi hel
It means; In Odisha no other temple is equal with the lofty temple of Purusottama.
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Eternal AUM

Shyama Prakash Senapati
Trans. by Bhagaban Jayasingh

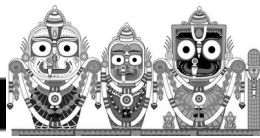
O God !
You are the throb of my heart
The circumference of my thoughts
You are the rhythm of my lyre
The musk of my fragrance.

O God !
You manifest in silence
You lie in commotion
You drift away in the soft murmur of
the river
In the twitter of birds
In the swish of the wind.



O Creator of this Universe !
You are the destination of all
Our hopes
The cadence of creation
The sound of AUM of the Vedas
The cascade of light
For all the creatures of this earth.

Bhagaban Jayasingh, Near Kendriya Vidyalaya, Ashram Chhak, Talabania, Puri-2.

**Introduction:-**

Culture and Religion in India contribute a significant role in promotion of National identity and International ethos. It is the Indian religious culture, which made many foreign travelers to visit India since ancient times. India having a good reservoir of various colourful religions is unique in the world, which consists of so many hues of various cultures in such a small area. The religion causes lot of changes



to die, and which a lot of salvation seeking foreigners would count among the 1000 destinations to visit before they die. For many NRIs, it represents an age-old link with their Indian roots. A foreign tourist generally looks for history, culture, shopping, entertainment and relaxation. In case of India, they also want a mystic experience.

Besides that, overseas holidayers and travellers from

Jagannath Culture, Its Chariot Festival in Western Countries and Religious Tourism : A Study of Indian Diaspora

Dr. Naresh Rout

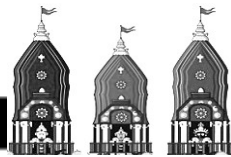
in the life and history of the any society and country. The same is the case in India too. On one hand, there are various religious temples having their own architectural style. On the other hand, there are a good number of traditions, beliefs, customs, rites and rituals that are living and vibrant.

However, Srikshetra Dham / Jagannath Dham, Puri is one such cultural and religious tourist destination, where one can get the flavour of pan-Indian religious beliefs and essence of cult and culture in the forms of rituals and customs. After all, Puri is a city where devout Hindus would like

across the globe have put India in the top five list of most attractive and satisfying holidaying destinations in the world as reported by 'Conda Nest Reader Travel award' survey. As such the domestic tourism reached 500 million in India during 2006. However, Jagannath Dham Puri has a greater importance in the culture of India is concerned with religious tourism of foreigners.

Objectives:-

This chapter leads to explore the influence of Lord Jagannath in foreign countries and its effectiveness in other cultures of the world; To



reveal the importance of Jagannath Culture as an entity and special culture of India; To measure the promotion of Religious Tourism in India, particularly in Odisha; To attempt on the interests of foreign tourists in Jagannath Cult; To focus on the influence of Jagannath culture in foreign countries such as America, Britain and Canada and so on and to find out the Jagannath temples in abroad and their patronisations.

Methodology

Researching the Jagannath culture of India in the foreign countries examines theoretical and conceptual issues, and explores resources, sources and research methods. This research study will follow the qualitative method with a view to come over the whole research in accordance with the primary and secondary sources.

Background

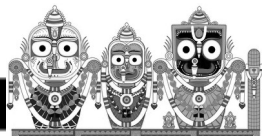
In travel and tourism, the destinations such as cultural centres and temple towns have something to reveal packed with myths and legends, ancient rituals, historical values and festivals, and Puri is evidently one such place. Long before the birth of modern term “Tourism”, the ancient land Puri has experienced the glory, the din and bustle of a travellers town. Here pilgrimage has been taken into the fold of tourism in the course of time. Puri is a religious destination having distinctive brand and has an aura that has been created over hundreds of years.

The tourist destinations are often sacred places, be it a Tirtha or a pilgrim Centre or an archeological site or a place of historical significance, besides natural heritage sites. In Indian Tourism scenario, cultural sites are the main tourism product for the foreign nationals. About 47% of foreign tourists coming to India are interested in our cultural heritage. In India, to-

day, there is a new breed of younger people who are re-discovering their tradition and culture. They’ve got money and are used to affluent lifestyle. If destinations such as Puri, Varanasi and Haridwar provide them with a spiritual experience set amidst the trappings of luxury, more and more people will be attracted. For people in the west, there’s a difference in approach to these places. While for Indians, it is a must take journey, for westerners, it is a combination of mysticism and mystery.

Whatever it may be, Puri is largely a pilgrim Centre, an eternal city, a holy land for liberation (Moksha); of course, a classic tourist destination owes its origin to the lord of the Universe-Sri Jagannath. Puri became famous to such an extent that it was regarded as heaven on earth and the lord Jagannath as the incarnation of Lord Vishnu. It was universally believed that the Jagannath Dharma/belief is the confluence of all religious faiths. Naturally, the precepts of different sects paid their visit to the holy land of Puri and influenced the rulers through their respective philosophical doctrines. While in Puri they ‘preached’ their philosophy and got themselves involved in the ritual services of Jagannath temple and also established their Mathas (monasteries). It was during the reign of Chodaganga Deva (1112-47 A.D.) the great Vaisnava saint of South India -Sri Ramanuja in between 1107 to 1117 A.D. visited Puri and stayed at Puri. The effect of his visit was the change of religious faith of king Chodaganga Deva who became “Parama Vaisnava”. In commemoration of his visit to Puri, Sri Ramanuja established a Matha. His disciple Govinda established “Emar Matha at Puri in front of Lions Gate, which is a great Matha (monastery) in Odisha at present.

Visnu Swami, another famous Vaisnava preacher of South India also visited Puri in second



half of 12th century AD and established a Matha near Markandeswar tank. Many Vaishnava reformers of South came to Puri and established their Mathas. Of the five Mathas of this sect at Puri, the “Radha Ballav Matha” standing in front of lions gate of Jagannath temple is noteworthy. Madhvacharya or Ananda Tirtha, Narahari Tirtha had visited Puri in the last part of 12th century A.D. A lot of epigraphic records about the activities of Narahari Tirtha are found in the Srikurma and Simanchala Temples. The coming of these four famous reformers and Vaisnava preachers of South India to Puri within a century (1112 to 1212 A.D.) greatly stimulated the cultural activities of this holy place which became the chief centre of Hindu religion in India. It is mentioned in Padma Purana that the Pandits all over India will accept no new faith unless it gets the approval of the Pandits of Puri.

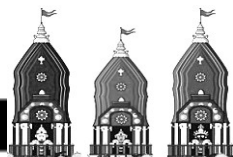
The synthetic faith of Jagannath is an epitome of divergent religious creeds and schools of philosophy that prevailed in India at different periods of her long cultural history. In the historic process of adjustments, Jagannath assimilated strange contradictions in a manner that is most amazing in the history of religious thought. “There is no discarding any in this religion of man”, wrote Pandit Nilakantha Das, “and all the gods and goddesses have found a place here and mingled here”.

Thus, the religious system developed centering around Jagannath faith attracts all the saints and seers, kings and commons that become unique in many ways. The assimilation of religious faiths as we have discussed and its continuation with a huge temple at Puri has given definite shape as a Tirthakshetra. The majestic temple of lord Jagannath at Puri was built during 12th century A.D. Anantavarmana Chodaganga Deva (1078

to 1147 A.D.) commenced its construction and Anangbhim III completed the construction. It is described in Madalapanji, the temple chronicle of Puri that Anangabhim constructed a temple of Srivatsa Khandasala type for lord Jagannath. The height of the present temple is 214 feet 8 inches.

In course of time, during the festivals particularly Car Festival, large congregation of pilgrims was felt. In the year 1810, Raja Sukhamaya Ray of Bengal had taken a leading step for construction of the Jagannath Road, which facilitated pilgrims to come easily. In 1901 Railway line was opened to Puri. It was during 1841 - 1891 and 1901 the pilgrim flow to Puri particularly during car festival as recorded is 1,12,000/2,00,000 and over 3 lakhs respectively. At present the tourist and pilgrim traffic to Puri is more than 5 million in a year (2006). During Car festival we receive about a million of tourist and pilgrims which is very good trend for tourism industry. We should prepare to showcase these potential for economic benefit as well as facilitate the tourist needs. The faith and belief are the dominant drivers in case of domestic tourists and the curiosity and the exotic appeal of our religion and culture is the attraction of foreign tourists. However, the need of the hour is social awareness and change of mindset to the positive side of tourism, so that we can go ahead.

Ratha Yatra (Chariot festival) commemorates the visit of trio brothers and sister (Jagannath, Baladev and Subhadra) to their Maternal Aunt's House (Mausi Maa Temple) near Saradha Bali, Puri. This festival is celebrated every year on Asadha Shukla Paksha Dwitiya (Second day in bright fortnight of Ashadha month). After all these, the conglomeration of travelers and devotees from foreign countries are seen in the Chariot Festival of Lord Jagannath. And the



famous 'Ratha Yatra' of Lord Jagannath is no longer confined into Puri alone. It is celebrated with pomp and gaiety in a number of foreign countries too.

Sri Lanka

It is quite noteworthy to mention that the 'Ratha Yatra' in Sri Lanka is known as 'Per herra'. The three deities-Vishnu, Natha and Pattini Devi are taken out of the temple and seated in the waiting chariots. Then the chariots roll in a colourful procession. The tooth of the Buddha is also taken out in a procession thus tracing a link between the Buddha and the Jagannath culture, for, Buddha is considered an incarnation of Lord Jagannath.

Bali

Indeed, Lord Jagannath is worshipped as Shiva in Bali although in Puri Lord Jagannath is worshipped as Vishnu. But both in Bali and Puri he is known as 'Purushottama' and a car festival is held every year for the Lord. So, it is also interesting to sketch the contribution of Bali in the faith of Jagannathism.

Nepal

It is also very interesting to see the tradition of Ratha Yatra in Nepal. Being a neighbouring country of India Nepal has a rich tradition of worship of Lord Jagannath. Legend has it that the 'Vishnu sheela' at the time of building the Jagannath temple had been brought from Nepal.

Bangladesh

Down through the ages, the people of Bangla are intertwined with the faith of Vishnu and Lord Jagannath. They have unique and distinctive belief and faith over the Jagannath Dham and Car Festival as well. A temple of Lord

Jagannath was built by king Jashpal at Dhaka in 12th century AD and since then the Car Festival is being held here. The chariot here is fifty feet high.

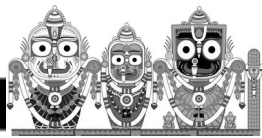
America

Be that as it may, this Jagannath faith has been transcended towards USA and her neighboring states. In a number of cities in America 'Ratha Yatra' has been quite popular thanks to ISKCON (International Society for Krishna Consciousness) movement. The major cities where it is held are Boston, Baltimore, Washington DC, Miami, New York, Los Angeles and Mexico City etc. Harekrishna temples in these cities take the lead in organising the car festivals.

London

It is very significant to mention that the British people are not far from this faith. They are also forerunner of Jagannath faith during the Car Festival. The chariot rolls from Hyde Park and goes up to Trafalgar square where a cultural show of much grandeur is organised after the chariot reaches there. The car festival of Jagannath is now held in more than two hundred cities all over the world but their duration varies between one to four days.

Whatever it may be, the religious and scenic beauty of Puri makes it the cultural capital of Odisha. The affluent culture, mystical aura and religious practices still keep alive the essence of humanity and faith in God. The rich tradition of the place spreads its wings to the dance, songs and architecture of shrines, which proudly display the colors of the century-old culture and brilliant artworks. Popularly known as the abode of Lord Jagannath, the place serves as land for almost all religious sects like Hindu, Sikh, Jain, Christian, and Islam. The pristine beauty of the sandy



beaches and greeneries of the place make this land of temples a paradise on earth. Puri not only serves as an ideal destination for the pilgrims but also for tourists and foreign travelers who like to explore the cultural richness of the country.

Conclusion:-

Be that as it may, it is well known that religious tourism routes in India are buzzing with activity and every year millions of devotees travel huge distances to visit the pilgrim centres. Add to those numbers the new age pilgrims- both foreigners or well heeled NRIs-who are also increasingly hitting India's pilgrim trails. So from the sacred Hindu cities of Varanasi, Puskar, Puri, Rameshwaram, Mt Abu and Risikesh to the Buddhist circuit in Bihar, UP and Himachal, the Sikh Golden Temple in Amritsar and Dargah in Ajmair, twin-track tourism is becoming the order of the day. Many of these pilgrim cities have developed as diverse and multicultural centres where devout Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Buddhists rub shoulders with footloose foreigners in search of the mystic orientalism. Economic Times remarked that India has always been considered as the land of spiritual awakening. With the boom in the tourism sector in India, domestic travellers and those from across the globe are using this opportunity to explore the various religious destinations in the country to understand the myriad shades of the land. No doubt the spiritual journeys in India today have come to mean more than just renunciation. They could signify anything from big profits to ethnic diversity and eastern mysticism. Therefore, Jagannath Dham has a spectacular identity and entity in the realm of religious tourism and Indian diaspora. Its sagacious and vivacious cultural

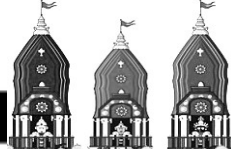
ethos made Indians as significant culture of the world. Moreover, innumerable western influences are being reflected by the spiritual conglomerations of Jagannathism in Odisha.

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Snana Jatra, also known as Deba Snana Purnima, is a ceremonial bath ceremony of the sibling deities held on Purnima (full moon day) of Jyestha month. As per the tradition, Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra are escorted from the sanctum sanctorum to the Snana Mandap (bathing altar) in a 'Pahandi' (procession) after 'Mangal Arati'. The mandap is an elevated platform on the temple premises

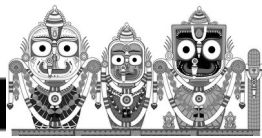


Bath Ceremony of Lord Jagannath

Prof. (Dr.) Dibyajyoti Moharana

facing east overlooking the Bada Danda. To be able to bear the stress during the procession, the deities are made to wear 'Senapatta', a body armour made of 'Baula' wood, by the Daitapatis who take charge of the deities from regular priests the previous night. It is here on the mandap that they are given a ritualistic bath after the sevayats perform a complex set of rituals. 'Chhera Pahanra', the ceremonial sweeping, is then performed by Puri King Gajapati Maharaj Dibyasingha Deb, following which 'Sahan Mela' or public darshan is allowed.

The procession, in which the divine deities are brought to Snana Mandap, is called 'Pahandi'. The water used for bathing the deities is taken from the Suna Kua (well) on the temple premises. After performing the rituals, 108 pitchers of herbal and aromatic water are used for bathing the three sibling deities. All the pots, preserved in the 'Bhoga Mandap', are first purified using turmeric, sandalwood and flowers. A set of special priests, 'Suaras', take these pots from the golden well to the bathing altar. This ritual is called 'Jalabhisheka'. Notably, the holy water is drawn from the well once a year for the purpose.



After completion of the bathing ceremony, the deities are decked up in 'Sada Besha'. Later in the day, Lord Jagannath, Devi Subhadra and Lord Balabhadra adorn the Hathi Besha (a form of Lord Ganesha). While Lord Jagannath and Lord Balabhadra are dressed like elephants, Goddess Subhadra dons lotus flower Besha. A special 'Bhog' is also prepared as an offering. The devotees are then allowed darshan of the Lords as they appear for 'Sahana Mela'.

At night, the deities are taken to the 'Anasara Ghar' (an asylum for the sick) on the temple premises having supposedly fallen ill after the elaborate bath and allowed to recuperate for 14 days when there is no public darshan. During this period, they are offered only fruits and water, mixed with cheese and 'Dasamula' medicines by the temple physician as per the Ayurveda.

With 108 pitchers of water having been poured on the deities, the colours too fade out, following which, the 'Daitas' repaint the idols. Thousands of devotees throng pilgrim city Puri in Odisha to have glimpse of Chaturddha Murti (Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and Goddess Subhadra along with Sudarshan) in Gajanan Besha (elephant attire) on Snana Mandap (bathing pandal) at Jagannath temple every year.

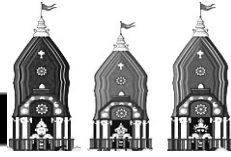
After having holy shower on the Snana Mandap, situated near Ananda Bazaar inside temple premises, in the afternoon, the deities are dressed like Ganesha, who bears head of an elephant. The elephant costume is known as 'Gaja or Hati Besha'. While Lord Jagannath and Balabhadra are dressed like elephant, their sibling Devi Subhadra gives the darshan in lotus flower besha.

Prior to dressing the lords in Gaja Besha, the rituals are conducted after Jalabhiseka (bathing ceremony). The servitors decorate the deities with flowers and Tulasi (holy basil). King Gajapati Dibya Singh Deb, the first servitor of Lord Jagannath, visits the Snana Mandap from his palace to pay obeisance to deities. He performs chhera pahanra (sweeping of the floor) at the pandal, one of the major rituals ahead of Gaja Besha, with the priests chanting mantras.

The deities are dressed in elephant attire, the costumes prepared by the artisans at Raghaba Das mutt and Gopal Tirtha mutt for Gaja Besha ritual on Snana Purnima. The Gajanan Besha of Lords are completed in the evening.

There is a story behind Gaja or Hati Besha of Lord Jagannath. According to researchers, the Lord of Universe had given darshan to Ganapati Bhatt, a staunch devotee of lord Ganesha, on the Snana Mandap on the auspicious occasion of Snana Purnima. In 15th century, Pandit Ganapati Bhatt of Mahaganapatya community had visited the century old shrine in Puri to have darshan of Lord Jagannath. He witnessed Chaturddha Murti on Snana Mandap on Snana Purnima. However, he could not get satisfaction as he wanted to see his lord within Lord Jagannath. While he was on his way back with disappointment, Lord Jagannath disguised as a priest insisted him to return the temple where he can see his Lord Ganesha. He was overwhelmed to have darshan of his Lord Ganesha within Chaturddha Murti on Snana Mandap. Since that period, the deities are being dressed in Gajanan Besha every year followed by holy bathing on Jyestha Purnima.

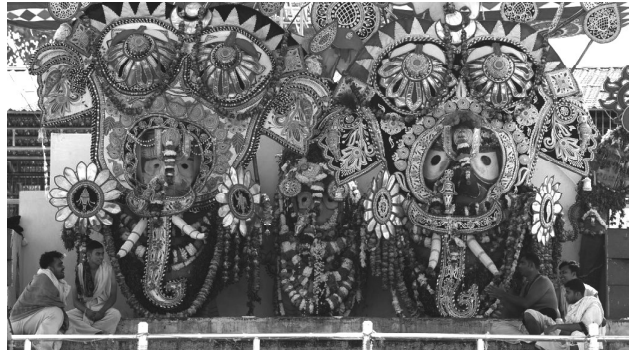
The tradition of decking up Lord Jagannath and Balabhadra in Gajanan or Hati Besha after the ceremonial bath can be traced to



the Hindu belief of beginning every religious rite with a worship of Lord Ganesh. After all the ceremony is a prelude to the annual Rath Yatra.

Before Hati Besha, it is time for Snana Yatra when the sibling deities are escorted from the sanctum sanctorum to the Snana Mandap (bathing altar) in a 'Pahandi' (procession) after 'Mangal Arati'. It is here on the mandap that they are given a ritualistic bath after the sevayats perform a complex set of rituals. It takes place on a full-moon day of Jyeshtha (May-June). Legends also has it that the Lords are dressed as Ganesh to satisfy the followers of the Ganapatya sect.

Some devotees opine differently on the performance of Hati Besha. According to them, many centuries ago, a scholar called Ganpati Bhatta paid a visit to the court of the king of Puri. The king invited him to see the Snana Yatra but the scholar declined stating that he refused to worship any god except Ganesha. The king insisted and not wanting to upset the royal patron, the scholar very reluctantly went to see the bathing ceremony. To his astonishment, he was unable to see Krishna; in the place of Krishna was Ganesha. Even Balabhadra had taken the form of Ganesha. He realized that Jagannath who is Vishnu and Balabhadra who is a form of Shiva, in their compassion, had taken note of his wishes and taken the form of Ganesha. The scholar also realized that the differences between Ganesha and



Vishnu and Shiva were all artificial and not divine. Since that day, during the bathing ceremony of Jagannath, priests place the mask of an elephant on the two brothers. This is the Hati-vesha or the elephant dress, when Krishna and Balarama become black and white elephants respectively, each a form of Ganesha. This Besha is chiefly conducted by the Palia Puspalak, Khuntia, Mekap and Daitapatis on this day. Lord Jagannath and Balabhadra assume Gajanana Besha. Raghav Das Mutt and Gopaltirtha Mutt supply the materials as per a prolonged tradition. Lakhs of devotee throng Puri on this day to have a 'darshan' of the sibling deities during the 'Sahana Yatra' period, as it is believed that it would rid them of all sins.

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In Kapila Samhita it has been observed :

Sarveshang Chaiba Kshetranang

Raja Shri Purusottamah

Sarveshang Chaiba Debanang

Raja Shri Purusottamah

Among all places of pilgrimage Purusottam Kshetra is best and among all gods Lord Purusottam is the best. Purusottam is also known as Lord Jagannath.

Over the centuries saints, seekers, scholars and general public are attracted towards Sankh Kshetra Puri. They derive spiritual joy at

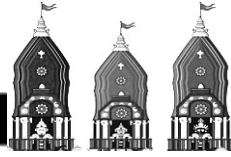


Greatness of the Jagannath Dham - Puri

Prof. (Dr.) Keshab Chandra Das



Puri. They were Madhvacharya, Ramanuja, Nimbark, Kabir, Nanak and many others. Saint Ganapati Bhatt saw his god in Lord Jagannath. The event is commemorated on Snana Purnima (the full-moon day of Jyestha) when Lord Jagannath is attired as Lord Gajanan after the ritual birth ceremony. Ganapati Bhatt at the sight was overwhelmed with joy. Shri Chaitanya Dev reached Puri in 1510 A.D. and lived the rest of his life. It was said that at the end he merged himself in Lord Jagannath.



From social point of view if we discourse about the very name Patitapabana- the redeemer of fallen, it is to make himself easily approachable to the unwashed millions that the compassionate Lord of the universe comes out of the great temple, once in a year at the time of car festival for nine days. As a matter of fact the Car festival should be taken as the pure essence of the Jagannath Chetana. Though He has been taken as the greatest Hindu god, all sorts of caste, creed, and religious feeling vanishes as we enter the premises of Jagannath.

If we go through the Shree Jagannath temple tradition, one vital group of servitors are no Brahmins and during car-festival He is left entirely to their care about one month. Being the Patitapaban-Redeemer of fallen, the poorest of the poor Dasia Bauri, Balaram Das, Salabeg, the non-Hindu devotee, received the mercy of Lord Jagannath. Socio-humanism of a unique variety is manifested here when the Lord of the lowliest and downtrodden descends from His throne to appease the hunger of His Jajpuria friend Bandhu Mohanty in distress.

Lord Jagannath has many devotees from the time immemorial. Balaram Das, Jagannath Das, Yosavanta, Shisu Ananta and Achyuta are the renowned devotees of the Lord of the Panchasakha age. Other devotees of order are Dasia Bauri, Bandhu Mohanty, Sri Chaitanya Deva, Bhakta Salabega and many others. They are reputed devotees and dedicated souls who were bestowed with divine blessing by their devotion.

Sri Jagannath is mysterious, a riddle. His existence only leads to a series of unsolved questions. The entire Odia literary epoch of the Middle-age is replete with this Jagannath consciousness. Sri Chaitanya has drawn him to

Sri Krishna consciousness and at last develops towards Maha Vaishnab trend. Prior to this, he was Mahatma Buddha. He was for everyone. He was Mono-God or universal soul or an idol, still a riddle. Jagannath was a particular cult. It being a cult was not even known till the 12th century A.D. However, this was obvious. In that time, society was flodded with multi-spiritual speculation such as Bajrayan, Sahajayan, Nath, Occulation, Sakta etc. Besides these, people also believed in transmigration of divine soul into human soul, black magic, bigotries and people's undivided faiths on fetishism. Later on, Jagannath became the representative God of the entire Hindu-Indians. In the process of faith and belief, Buddhism took the shape of Sri Jagannath.

Buddha is the ninth icon of Sri Jagannath, the proofs of which are found at the topmost part of the main-door of the temple. Sri Jagannath is substantiated as Buddha by the celebrated Odia poet Jayadev and a series of Odia poets of the 12th century A.D. However, Jagannath and Buddha are one and same. These have had no evidences in support of the stand. One cannot deny the fact that there have been much resemblances between the two.

Sangha, Dhamma, and Buddha in Buddhist philosophy are amity, grace and the theory of an epithet of Lord Jagannath. Similarly, the values like friendliness, sympathy, compassion and free from bondages of birth are the concept of Patitapabana (an epithet of Lord Jagannath). Buddha is also regarded as Patitapabana. Likewise, Buddha was transformed to Jagannath in Bajrayana.

There are a good number of Mathas in Puri. It is said that there were seven hundred and fifty two Mathas in Puri at some point of time in the past. But a lot of them have been vanished by



the passing of time. These Mathas had been established by great sages and spiritual leaders of our country, of course, with the sponsorship of the kings, who used to grant land and other resources. The spiritual leader like Sri Chaitanya Dev established Radhakanta Matha. Emar Matha was established by Santha Ramanujacharya and the great spiritual poet, Jagannath Das, who wrote Odia Bhagabat, which is adorned in each and every household of the state, established Odia Matha, so on and so forth. The Mathas have some scheduled services towards the temple and the Trinity, at large. But these Mathas have a significant contribution for the development of education of Odisha, by giving free boarding and lodging to poor and needy students who come to Puri for the purpose of pursuing study.

The Jagannath cult cannot be complete without mention of the famous poet Jayadev of 12th century A.D. The Famous work composed by Jayadev is Geetagovinda which depicts love between Lord Krishna and his consort Radha. This famous lyrical work has a tremendous influence over rituals of Lord Jagannath of Puri. Since 12th century A.D, the Geetagovinda has been exercising a sway over Odia culture and life in many ways. The later half of the 12th century is known as Jayadev era or Geetagovind era.

Since the famous work Geetagovinda was considered sacred, it was allowed to be sung in the Puri temple during the period of the king Narasingha-II before the advent of Lord Chaitanya Dev to Puri.

The Puranas and other Sanskrit texts refer to this holy city as Nilachal, Nilagiri, Niladri, Purusottam Kshetra, Srikshetra, Sankha Kshetra.

It is also known as Jagannath Dham and is one among the four Dhams of India. The other three Dhams are Dwarikanath, Badrinath and Rameswaram.

Puri has a large number of smaller temples and Mathas. It has a salubrious climate and attracts tourists from all over the world round the year and particularly during the summer months. Puri has one of the finest beaches of the world and is the house of numerous Odishan ship craftsman and exquisite handi-crafts of a large variety.

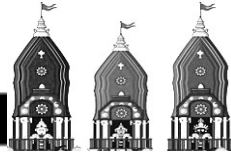
The temple of Lord Jagannath is called Bada Deula i.e. the great temple. Here the sea is mahodadhi i.e. great ocean. The Main road of the Town is Bada Danda i.e. the Grand Road. The Prasad i.e. offerings of Lord Jagannath is Mahaprasad (the holiest food). The cremation ground at Puri is Swargadwara (gateway to heaven).

The culture of Odisha is immensely dominated by Lord Jagannatha. The other name of the culture of Odisha is Jagannath culture. In every phase of the history of Odisha, Lord Jagannath has played influential role proving that, He is the nucleus of the culture of Odisha.

Thus the greatness of Puri Jagannath Dham has become a centre of attraction for saints of different faiths, pilgrims, tourists and general people who visit sacred place every year and pay their obeisance to Lord Jagannath.

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Tulasi Kshetra, the Abode of Tulasi is the ancient name for Kendrapara. It has come to the present stage by the Inner current of religious consciousness of the then 'Tosala' on Tosali state. It changed its name in stages as Gupta Kshetra, Brahma Kshetra, Kendrapalli, Kandaranagar, Kandharapadhi at various point of time. At present it is known as Kendrapara, pregnant with a great cultural heritage.

LOCATION AND AREA -

Kendrapara the oldest Sub-division (1859) and the Municipality (1869) of Odisha



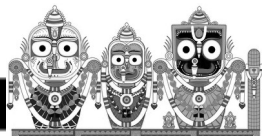
The Siddha Baladev of Tulasikshetra : A Vision

Dr. Basudev Das

is situated between 20° 18' N and 20° 49' E Latitude and 86° 25' E to 87.1 E longitude, Kendrapara town stands as the epic centre of this vast alluvial plain at 20° 30' E latitude and 86° 25' E longitude.

Its area stretches from the Bay of Bengal in the East to Asia Mountain range in the West, the river Vaitarani in the North and the Mahanadi valley in the South. The average annual rainfall varies from 59".47' or 152 cm. Enriched by numerous rivers, rivulets and forests, Kendrapara occupies a unique place for pride of its own. It is

now widely believed that before 2000 years, the entire area was submerged in the Bay of Bengal. Due to change of the course of the river Mahanadi a horse shoe lake (Madhusagar) came into existence and later transformed into alluvial plain. Washed in the South by the rivers like Mahanadi and its distributaries and in the North by the Brahmani river system, the economic status of the entire plain has been enriched due to bumper production of food grains. Sri Siddha Baladev is the Presiding deity of Kendrapara, Tulasi Kshetra. This deity represents the agricultural pastoral activities of the two great communities that inhabit



the vicinity. Lord Baladev, the symbol of agriculture and war, was worshipped by one milk-man Siddha Das, who comes of a native village Kuhudi. The legend says that worship of Lord Baladev was the culmination of the religious war between the Aryans and the aboriginals. Lord Baladev the elder brother of Lord Krishna was the popular Lord of Aryans. It was quite obvious that cultural war ensued between the then ruler of the area and 'Kandharasura' a great sage of the Buddhistic 'Arhata'. He was the representative of the 'Adivasi' Kandha and 'Uria' Kandha culture. In the cultural trustee the Aryans gained control over Baladev worship where the present Juma Masjid and the Post office of Kendrapara stand. In order to keep Lord Baladev away from the anger of the Moghul aggressors, the deity was worshipped for several years near 'Sakhibata' by the side of the river Loona, a distributor of the Mahanadi (1663 to 1670).

OLD TEMPLE OF THE DEITY:

At first the deity Baladev was venerated in 'Chatusrasramandapa' with Tulasi during the reign of Bhuma Maharani Kalyani. Then the temple was erected by Jajati Keshari in 9th century who had dug a large tank, known as 'MAVOI' Puskarini, which still exists near present District

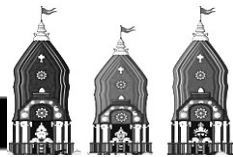
Hospital. Historians say that a big temple was built by the king Ananga Bhima Deva III for Lord Baladev for spreading Jagannath cult in the 13th century A.D. Art and architecture embellished the temple of 90' height like the Puri temple. The magnificent REKHA DEULA of the 13th Century was destroyed first by Kalapahad. Then the newly built temple was destroyed completely by Miad MD. Jan in 1663 A.D. The cause of destruction of the temple was that Baladev was not paying Jijia Kara to the Centre, A-Jeb. Lord Baladev originated from Maninaga Balabhadra was adored during Mudgal period and was declared as 'Rastradevata' by Mudgal king Sambhuyasha in his kingdom: Uttar Tosali. Most probably this religious tradition in this vast alluvial area began in the 3rd or 4th century acquiring agricultural essence and roots. Circumstances brought Lord Baladev as the leader or pioneer of agriculture and war. That's why symbolically a plough and Saunanda 'Musala' adorn his hand.

PRESENT TEMPLE:

The present temple at Ichhapur was built in 1670 A.D. by the combined efforts of the feudal rulers of Kujanga and Chhedara namely Gopali Sandha Routray and Srinivas Narendra respectively. It was then only BATA DEULA and at a later stage the present Trideula (main temple) were constructed by Marhattas through the endeavours of Saint Gopi Das during 1770-73 A.D.

DESCRIPTION OF DEITY:

Lord Baladev was worshipped with Revati on his left lap and Tulasi beneath his feet. Yellow coloured Tulasi indicates sense and style. The same type of deity made of stone is found in Turintara, near Nimapara, sculptured by Ganga queen Baghalla Devi in the 12th century A.D. It



changed to Vaishnavic cult at the time of Sri Chaitanya and Jagannath Das, the great Odia poet of 16th century. Atibadi Jagannath Das had lived for some years in his Odia matha and brought change to the deity and the mode of worship. This was the centre of 'Jnanamishra Bhakti' then, but after Sri Chaitanya's frequent visit every year Prema Bhakti was added to it. Then the Sadabhuja Gauranga was installed in the temple as a mark of Prema Bhakti alias Gaudiya Bhakti. Because that as it may Baladev and Tulasi turned to Baladevjew and Subhadra and statue of Lord Jagannath was added to it in accordance with the tradition of Puri Srikshetra. The Elder brother - There is a question in the mind of the people as to how Baladev is the elder brother of Jagannath. Jagannath is not real Krishna, rather an embodiment and symbol of Krishna's attributes. The fact is not that the deity Baladev was embellished and worshipped first by Indradyumna here. According to the Skanda Purana, King Indradyumna came from Avanti and met Udraraja at night after which he started for a visit to Nilamadhava worshipping Baladev herein 'Dhatu Kandar Aranya'. Eyes of bigger size bear testimony of its time older in comparison of Lord Jagannatha. Prior to Nilamadhava, one Mudgal Madhava was worshipped in the 'Dhatu Kandara' forest to the north of 'Chitrotpala' (Mahanandi). It indicates that Baladev who was adored by Milkman Community has older antiquity.

SRI CHAITANYA IN KENDRAPARA:

Sri Chaitanya visited Kendrapara with his followers. They stayed in Chhedara, at present known as Baranga, for five days and took nabanna (new rice) in the month of 'Margasira' (November) then was transported to Bengal. When Sri Chaitanya came to Odisha particularly

to Puri, Srikshetra and stayed for eighteen years, at that time he used to come to pay homage to Lord Baladev and to spread his 'Sankirtana Rasa' or spiritual hymn and returned with his disciples to Nilachala Dham just before the 'Snana Purnima'. He was very much pleased in holy Tulasi Kshetra for its name and paid obeisance to Tulasi Plant and offered 'Rasabali', Ekarksen, Jagatsthita, revealed the pious Bhoga Rasabali.

SANTHA GOPI DAS:

Santha Gopi Das is really a vicar of Baladevjew who had constructed the main temple, Deula Bedha and Gundicha Mandira. He came to this place in 1728 as a pilgrim with 'Yamayata' from West to North. He came across Baladev in Baranga Jungle, in a very simple and poor temple: in a very neglected condition. Then he spared no pains for worship of the deity in a dignified manner. Then Santha Gopi Das met Raghujee Bhonsala after Marhattas captured Cuttack in 1751 A.D. Raghujee granted twelve 'Potan Bahel' to Santha Gopi Das in 1790 AD in favour of Lachhamanjee and Raghunathjee of Kusiapal. Actually villages were not granted for Baladevjew but to Raghunathjee for which he could mobilize him to grant some villages for the management of the deity. In fact, Gopi Das was the architect of the entire temple complex and solely responsible for advancement of the Kshetra and its popularity growing gradually and steadily. From 1728 AD till 1942 AD Mahantei system of administration ran smoothly.

MANAGEMENT:

During the reign of Marhatta, Mahanta was in charge of Management of the deity. According to the directive of British Govt. in 1810 AD, the property of Endowment merged in Revenue Board but the 'Mahanta' of the Matha



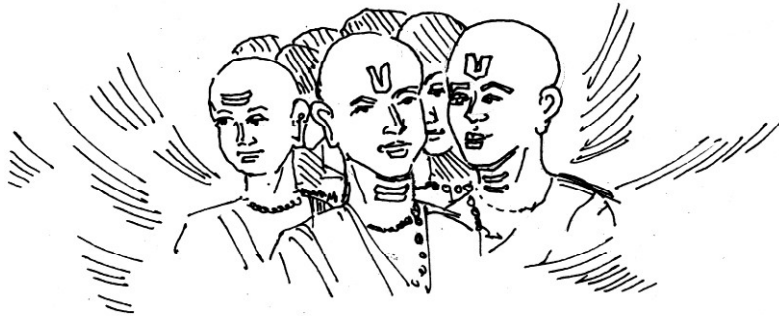
remained as caretaker (Marfatdar) of that property and deities from 1730 to 1942 AD. In succession about nine 'Mahanta' remained in charge of the temple and worship of the deity, in 1863 'Pancha Committee' that consisted of five members managed the temple and looked after its rituals. The first Pancha committee headed by Radhashyam Narendra managed the various rituals of the deity smoothly. The temple did not remain as only a religious holy place but became a living institution affecting different aspects of social life. Its influence spread far and wide and could form an indelible impact on mass mind and bound these together.

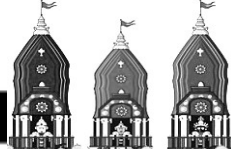
HOLINESS:

In spite of the fact that Buddhism had a strong base in this part of the land, yet Vaishnavism also had a considerable grip over the people. Thus tantric Buddhism and new Saivite traits got assimilated into this Kshetra, which is evident everywhere in Odisha. Most probably Brahmins came to Odisha in the 9th century during the period of Jajati Keshari from Kanya Kubja to Jajpur.

Those Brahmins having settled in Odisha might have started worshipping the deity about one or two hundred years ago. Before the arrival of those Brahmins, all the deities were being worshipped by aboriginal or Abheera, Aheera of herdsmen. Thus the cultural stream of the place acquired complexity and diversity. Tulasi Kshetra is believed to be more important than Puri Srikshetra because of religious conviction that pilgrimage to Lord Jagannath is futile if it is not followed by a visit to Lord Baladevjee. Lord Baladeva is the excuser and Saviour of Jagannath, He grants pardon to those who come to this place after a visiting to Jagannath. Hence Baladev is elder to Jagannath and Tulasi Kshetra is greater than the Srikshetra.

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The Suryavamsi Gajapati kings of Odisha ruled for a hundred and five years only. Yet under this short-lived dynasty, Odisha reached the height of its glory. Such, in short, was the state of affairs when the first Gajapati king ascended the throne of Odisha. He is called Kapileswara in most of his inscriptions but in Odisha he is better known as Kapilendra. The kingdom of Odisha under Kapilendra Deva extended from Ganga to the Pennar and for some time up to the river Kaveri, in the South. The Pennar remained the southern boundary of the kingdom also under Purushottama



Navakoti Karnata Kalabargeswara

Dr. Janmejay Choudhury



Dev, the second Gajapati king. Prataprudra Deva, son of Purushottama, lost the Telugu districts south of the Godavari. The Suryavamsi period was marked by the first renaissance in Odia literature. The Odia religious poems of this period, “helped in passing the bulk of religious and mythological information from generation to generation” with “land-marks in the development of Odia literature”.

The Gajapati assumed a number of titles denoting supreme sovereignty. Kapilendra Deva styled himself Gajapati, Gaudeswar (the lord over

Gauda) and Navakoti Karnata Kalabargeswar (the lord over ninety millions of the Karnata people and of Kalabarga). Gulbarga, the ancient capital of the Bahmani kingdom, came to denote that kingdom in the inscriptions of the Gajapati kings. The title ‘Navakoti Karnata Kalavargeswar’ assumed by the Suryavamsi Gajapatis appears for the first time in the Velligalani plates of Kapilendra Deva dated 1458 AD. In April 1458, Kapilendra Deva was present in the Guntur district. He granted the village of Velligalani to the Brahmins for the religious merit of his parents. The Velligalani plates describe Kapilendra Deva’s

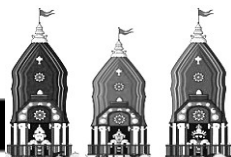


victory over the kings of Dhara, Hampe, Delhi and Gulbarga. These claims cannot be substantiated in the present state of our knowledge. In the Odia supplement of the record, Kapilendra Deva assumed for the first time the title of the overlord of Karnata and Kalabarga. The exact significance of the word Navakoti has not been properly understood so far. Both Manmohan Chakravarti and R.D. Banerjee understood it to mean “the ruler over ninety millions of Karnata and Kulbarga”. This numerical figure has been associated in Kapilendra Deva’s inscriptions with Karnata. The conventional expressions were used in South India to indicate the number of villages or of population of a kingdom. ‘Navakoti’ was a conventional number which was used to indicate the population of Karnata. The Gajapatis styled themselves as Parama Bhattaraka in some inscriptions like the Srisailam inscription of Kapilendra Deva, No.30 of 1915; and the Somavarapadu grant of Virabhadra, N.D.I. Vol. I No. 21. Kapilendra Deva styled himself Parama Maheswar in his epigraph at Srisailam, and Purushottama Deva used the title Parama Vaishnava in his Draksharama inscription.

Kapilendra Deva was the ruler of the countries Navakoti, Karnata, and Kalbarga. In support of this surmise he has cited the evidence of one of the slokas in the Gopinathpur inscription. That sloka begins with “Srikhandadri-payodharopari karam nirmaya” :- He identifies the word Navakoti of the title with the Srikhandadri of the Gopinathpur inscription. “M.M.Chakravarti understood the meaning of the quotation as levied taxes over the Khanda hill, but did not give a thought to identify it. ‘Khanda means nine’ (Sanskrit dictionary, Sarvasabda-Sambodhini, Madras 1875). Srikhandadri means

the wealthy region of the nine forts, the same as ‘Navakoti’. ‘navanam kotanam samaharah navakotam; Navakotam yasmin tat’ – Navakoti... ‘Navakoti Karnata Kalavargeswara’ is found in every colophon given at the end of every ucchvasa of ‘Sarasvativilasam’. Srikhandadri for Navakoti and Kancipura for Karnata are synonyms used for metrical purposes.” Then he enumerates, the names of the nine forts indicated by the epithet as Bellamkonda, Vinukonda, Kondavidu, Nagarjunakonda, Rajamahendry, Peddapuram, Kaluvalapalli, Oddadi and Potnuru. Therefore, Navakoti or Srikhandadri are expressions to indicate the whole region from Simhacalam in the north to Nellor in the south. The region from Srimachalam in the north to Nellor in the south indicated by the expression ‘Navakoti’ or Srikhandadri includes several other important forts as Udaygiri, Kandukur, Addanki, Ketavaram, Kondapalli etc.

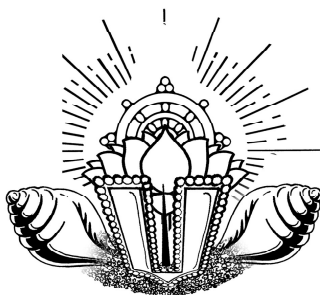
The word Navakoti in the title ‘Navakoti Karnata Kalavargeswar’ assumed by Kapilendra Deva may have been the numerical figure affixed to either Karnata singly or Karnata and Kalabarga clubbed together; and it must have represented the number of the gramas in these countries. Karnata of the title is a reference to the Vijayanagara kingdom and Kalabarga is a variant of Gulbarga, the capital of the Bahamaby Sultans. It may be argued that ‘Navakoti’, i.e., ‘nine crores’ is too huge a figure for a state. But when a province like Nolambavadi could be 32,000, the whole entire Karnata empire might very well have contained ‘nine crores’ of gramas. But the term grama must not be confused with modern village to denote which we invariably use the word ‘grama’. On the other hand the word grama indicates an unit of measurement. Though it is hard



to conjecture what it actually represents in terms of measurement in modern days, there can be no doubt that it was an unit indicating certain extent of land. Taking advantage of the confused affairs in the kingdom of Rajahmundry, Kapilendra Deva extended his territory. The entire Visakhapatnam district passed under his sway by 1443. The death of Deva Raya II in 1446, removed the last obstacle to the path of his southward aggression. An inscription from Punugonda, Tanaku Taluk, West Godabari district dated 1370 A.D. 1448 shows that Kapilendra Deva was already in effective possession of the Godavari delta. For a few years Kapilendra Deva postponed further conquest in the South, his attention being diverted towards his northern frontier. After occupying the province of Rajahmundry, Kapilendra Deva turned his attention towards Bengal. He similarly wanted to extend his north-eastern frontier upto the river Ganga. In his Jagannath temple inscription dated April 1450, Kapilendra Deva made a reference to his 'Digvijaya' against 'Malika Parisa' (Malik Padshah). In all probability, he won a victory over Sultan Nasiruddin, who reigned from 1442 to 1459, and assumed the title of Gaudeswar or overlord of Bengal. The title of Gaudeswar was used for the first time in the Jagannath temple and subsequently, in an inscription in the Simhachalam temple (No. 363 XI of 1899 dated July 1453).

But we know that Kapilendra Deva had not conquered Bengal in or before 1450 or Bidar and Karnata in or before 1458. All that can be definitely asserted is that he defeated the kings of Bengal, Bidar and Karnata and claimed suzerainty over them. The Gopinathpur temple inscription calls him 'Karnata ojhasa simhah' (yawning lion to Karnata) and 'Kalavarga jayi' (victor over Kalabarga). Gopinathpur temple inscription records that Kapilendra Deva was a scion of the Surya vamsa (Bhasvad Vamsavatamsa-v.4). According to his inscription at Srisailam, he was a pillar of the Surya vamsa. The Chavali plates of Ganadeva, the Anantavaram and Idupulupadu plates of Pratap Rudra and the 'Saraswati Vilasam' refer to the Solar lineage of Kapilendra Deva. Gajapati Kapilendra Deva made his appearance on the political stage of Odisha as an ambitious officer who usurped the throne of his master. But like his contemporary Saluva Narasimha, he amply justified his action by obtaining glory for the kingdom. But his death put an end to his activities.

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Spring comes. Nature dazzles. Trees become colourful with tender new leaves. Flower blossoms. Wind distributes sweet fragrance all around. Cuckoo sings melodiously among the branches of the mango trees. Sweet, enchanting, pleasant breeze (*Malay*) blows from the south and creates a sensational feeling and thrilling among human beings. Body, mind and heart rejoice. Among an elegantly embellished surrounding, the spring festival is observed. Especially this festival has a religious significance and observed in all Hindu temples, especially in *Srimandira, Puri*. The deities Lord *Jagannath*.

observe the day playing with coloured powder among each other. This is a universal festival. It has both religious importance and social



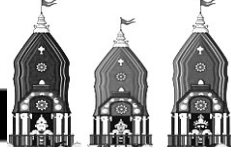
Spring Festival and Chacheri Besha of Lord Jagannath

Dr. Sarbeswar Sena

Lord *Balabhadra* and Goddess *Subhadra* are adorned with *Chacheri Besha* and that is prominent one among different *Beshas* of the deities. Lord *Jagannath* is worshipped as *Dolagobind* in this festival.

The most expected the 10th day of light fortnight of *Falguna* (according to Indian Calendar February - March) comes. The day is called *Fagu Dasami* and the spring festival begins. The full moon day of *Falguna* (*Dola Purnima*) and the very next day is the festival of colours (*Holi*). People of Odisha and India as well

significance. All the people are tied up with the thread of love, affection and brotherhood, irrespective of caste, colour, creed and sex. The festival has been referred as "*Basantotsava*". The festival held in the honour of "*Madan*" the Cupid was later transformed as *Dolatsava* or the spring festival of Krishna. Krishna is propitiated on the occasion as "*Madan Mohan*". Description of the festival as *Dolatsava* finds mention in a number of *Puranas*. The "*Padma Purana*" says, "One is expiated of all sins, who gets a vision of Krishna swaying in a swing. The festival is the celebration of the romantic union of



Radha and Krishna and are placed in a swing and are worshipped by smearing them with *abir* (coloured powder)”.

The origin of the spring-festival can be traced back to the diversion of Lord Krishna of *Dwapara Yuga*. Sri Krishna, an incarnation of Sri Jagannath has many amazing diversions. Among these *Basanta Rasa* (amorous pastime) is prominent one and celebrated in *Falguna*. Sri Krishna, Shree Radha with other *gopis* (milkmaids) are emerged in eternal amusement during this festival in Vrindabana (a place of pilgrimage near Mathura). The ladies of *Gopa*, worship Sri Radha and Sri Krishna both seated in a *Doli* (swing) decorated with fragrant flowers. The surrounding is colourful and juicy. The sacred river, the Yamuna flows. *Kadamba* trees (a kind of flower trees) stand on the river bank. Vrindaban creates the illusion of *Baikunthapuri* (the abode of Vishnu). Heart touching natural surroundings and the *Vasanta Rasa* commences. The first day of Chaitra (the last month of Hindu calendar) is the colour-festival. Radha Krishna and the people of *Gopa Nagari* play *phagu* (coloured powder). They smear each other with coloured powder and spray coloured water in *pitchkari* (a syringe) and derive sacred and devotional pleasure. Sri Radha and other women of *Gopa* are the true devotees of Sri Krishna and their love towards Him is sacred and called *Aprakruta Prema* (eternal love). According to *Gaudiya Vaishnabas*, their devotion is regarded *Prema Bhakti* or *Raganuga-Bhakti* (the stage of bhakti characterised by pure love; the perfectional state of religion). These are the religious traditions of *Dwapara yuga*, related to Sri Radha and Sri Krishna.

The Hindu mythologies and Sanskrit texts vividly narrate the spring festival occasion. There

is an interesting story behind the origin of the festival. Sri Radha has lost her earrings and Sri Krishna gets the ornaments. He has deep love for Sri Radha and eagerly waits to meet her and is in search of a creative plan. Krishna is better known for his Maya (illusion) and materialises his plan. He calls for his bosom friends, *Dama*, *Sudama*, *Madhumangal* and other boys and a *yatra* is arranged. A *Vimana* (a self-moving chariot of God) is constructed. The ear ring of Sri Radha is placed in the *Vimana* in a hanging position. The friends joyfully carry the *Vimana* on their shoulders and Sri Krishna follows them from the behind with other friends. The milkman-boys play *Laudi* (a long stick) and recite *Ogala* (one type of song). Sri Radha recognises her ear ring and her joy knows no bounds. Her attraction towards Sri Krishna becomes multi-fold. From that day spring-festival has been started. It has become a contiguity of our tradition and observed all over India. Especially the spring festival in *Srimandir, Puri* is famous and the deities give an opportunity to his votaries to see them in *Chacheri Besha*.

Shree Jagannath is the father of all incarnations. He is the Supreme Being and Sri Krishna is a part of his divinity. The tradition of the spring festival of *Dwapara yuga* still continues in *Kali yuga* and has become famous in *Purusottam Kshetra*. It has a separate attraction among twelve *yatras* of Lord *Jagannath*. The spring festival is also known as ‘*Dola Yatra*’. Hindu mythology says,

“*Falgune purna masyatum bidadhyaat
baishnabaih saha
Srikrushna priya bhaktasya basant
syarcchanotsabam.*”

Regarding other festivals of Sri Jagannath it is narrated in different religious books and



Puranas. Among these twelve *yatras* are important,

“*Manchasnanam rathabaragatih sayanam
chayane dwe*

*Parswa bruttih sayan nibrutti pabrutti
pusya puja*

*Dolayatra damanakamahotakshya puja
trutiya*

*Chaikam yatra bidhini gadita dwadasaita
narendra.”*

Dolayatra in *Srimandira*, *Puri* is observed from *Phagu Dasami* to the day of full moon (5 days). It is also known as ‘*Basanta Gundicha*’. During this period special rituals are performed and these are fixed beforehand. Regarding this *Purusottam Geeta* narrates, “The deities are adorned in twenty four *beshas* in a year. These include the *Chacheri Besha* of the lords of *Srimandir* that takes place during *Dola* festival.” Again, it speaks that, “*Tora bibidha besh dekhi / Nirmal hela mora akhi/ chaturbinshati tatwa katha/ chabisi beshare byabastha / kabye ke barniba mahima.*” (seeing your different *beshas* / my eyes become pure/ tale of twenty four Supreme soul/ Arrangement of twenty four *beshas* / no one can describe the excellence in a poetic work”). Winter departs, spring comes. The winter – *Sringar* (amorous pastime) of Lord Jagannath comes to an end. Then the spring festival begins from *Vasanta* Panchami which is also called *Sri Panchami*. During *Vasanta* rituals the *Chacheri Besha* of the deities is a heavenly diversion of Sri Jews in *Sri Mandir*.

Many poets are fascinated to narrate the ‘*Chacheri Besha*’ in their literary creations. Among them *Sharanaa Das*, a poet of sixteenth century has composed a poetic work entitled ‘*Chacheri Lila*’. He describes an episode related

to Sri Krishna and Sri Radha of *Dwapara yuga*. Radha has lost her ‘*Tagadi*’ (one type of ornament). Sri Krishna gets it and narrates before his friends,

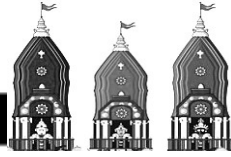
“*Ebe ambhe upaye Kariba / Dola jatra
kari ambhe jatra bhiaaiba / Ratra chacheri
buliba / Dihudi hula jaliba / E tadagi nete
bandhi jhulaiba / Je mohara boli dekhi
janiba.*”

(Now we are to find out a means/ start *Dola yatra* / Move *chacheri* in the night/ *Hula* (a lighted torch) in hand / The *tadagi* hangs from the *Neta* (a flag)/ can know her who recognises it).

This is the origin of *Chacheri yatra* according the poet *Sharana Das*.

Spring festival in *Sri Mandira* is celebrated from the 10th day of the bright fortnight of *Falgun* up to the full moon day. The representative deities *Dola Govinda*, *Bhudevi* and *Shreedevi* are taken in procession to *Dola Bedi* located outer compound wall of the main Temple and special rites are performed.

On *Falgun Dasami*, after completion of *Madhyana Dhoopa*, the Sri Jews are dressed in red clothes to play with colours in the temple with the devotees and powdered colours applied to the deities. Then *chandan lagi* is done. *Sridevi* & *Bhudevi* carried to the *Dakhina Ghara* for *Chacheri Besha*. It is to be noted that the colour sprinkling play of *Mahaprabhu* begins from *Dasami* and continues for five days culminating in *Dola Purnima*. Everyday, the *Vijaya murtis* of *Jagannath* go on a palanquin to *Dola Vedi* (towards north of the Temple) in a procession. The festival includes a dramatization of two parties of six members each, telling stories, reciting *slokas*, singing and acting. The leader is called



Gayaka. During the five day festival Shree Jews are offered *Dola Bhoga* comprise of 'Akapagi Ukhada', 'Chuda Bhaja', 'Chuda pua', 'Ukhuda Muan', 'Nadia Pati', 'Chuda Ghasa', 'Khaja' 'Saakara', 'Bhaja Chana', 'Gaja Muga' (sprouted Moong), season fruits like banana, grapes etc. 'PanchaMrit', 'Guda pani' (a solution of jogger in water), 'Chhena' (cheese), accomplished by *Nali abir* (dry red colour), *Alati Kathi* (cotton wrapped round coconut sticks, dipped in *deshi* ghee), incense sticks, camphor and sandal wood paste. An additional *bhoga* comprising the same ingredients in lesser quantities is also offered to musical instruments (*khola*) a barrel drum known as 'Khola Puja'. During this festival special offerings are arranged and offered to the deities, called *Chacheri Bhoga*. Among those *pana* (a sweet drink), *phena* (a kind of sweet), *Sakara* (sugar), *Ladu* (balls of sweets), *Singada* (a kind of cake), *Khali* (parched paddy), *Dahi* (butter milk), *Ada pacheli*, *sara* (cream), *Adhma*, *Gotika*, *Chhena Manda* (a kind of cake prepared with cheese), *chuda* (flattened rice), papaya, *Kora* (a kind of sweet), sliced banana, sugarcane, camphor, fruits and cooked offering are prominent.

In the month of Phalguna the *Chacheri Besha* of Lord *Jagannath* takes place. It is an age-old tradition prevailing all over India. People play with coloured powder and throw powder over friends and relatives. Sri *Jagannath* is the best representative of the people by playing with red powder. From the 10th bright day of the month of *Falguna* (February-March) the deities are decorated with *Chacheri Besha* on *Ratna Vedi*. In this adornment the deities wear red clothes and red flowers. The devotees derive boundless joy seeing the *besha*. This festival is celebrated with great enthusiasm and devotion.

Chacheri Besha is indeed a significant festival of the people of Odisha & India as well. The festival is initially associated with Lord *Jagannath*, Lord *Balabhadra* and Goddess *Subhadra*. They are highly revered by the people of the state. During this five day festival, the deities are adorned with *Chacheri* vasha. This is a special kind of decoration. This *besha* is performed during midday and sandal-paste is applied on the bodies of the deities. The deities are adorned with a special quality clothes called *Boirani* and *Madhabali*. They are also adorned with four ear rings called 'Kundal' and two *Tadagis*. On the auspicious occasion of *Dola Purnima*, the four deities inside the Sanctum Santorum of the *Sri Mandir* are decked up in *sunu besha* seated on the *Ratna Singhasan*. This *Rajadhiraj Besha* or *sunu besha* is much loved by the devotees as divine siblings are decked in gold jewellery embellished with diamonds, taken out from the temple treasury. Lord *Jagannath* is worshipped as *Dola Govinda* and Lord *Govinda* with Goddess *Sridevi* are placed on the *Dola Bedi*. After the *Chacheri Besha* is performed the Goddess *Sridevi* and *Bhudevi* are taken to the south cabin.

The *Chacheri Besha* is the most significant one and the captivating decoration of the deities. The stunning decoration attracts devotees in large number not only from Odisha but also all over the world.

Dola yatra of Lord *Jagannath* is called 'Basanta Gundicha'. It is narrated in the mythology, the 'Niladri Mahodaya'. The votaries get an opportunity to have a glance at *Dola Govinda* in this festival; they get equal piety witnessing Sri *Jagannath* on the chariot 'Nandighosh' during *Sri Gundicha* (car festival), get salvation and never take rebirth on the earth



again. *Dinakrushna Das* is an Odia poet, belonging to the *Vaishnab* tradition of *Bhakti* movement. His poems are devoted to Lord Sri Krishna. Among these '*Nitya Tatwa Rahas*' is very much familiar and descriptions regarding '*Vasanta Rasa*' is the main theme. He narrates that *Vasanta* festival is observed in the *Mina Masa* and the Vaishnavas have begun the festival. Similarly, Vyasa Deva has described the diversions of Lord *Jagannath* in the mythology '*Skanda Purana*'. It is a spectacular creation among the eight puranas (mythologies) that Vyasa has written. Especially, the '*Vaishnab Khanda*' speaks about the spring festival. The saint Jaimini narrates the grandeur of *Dola* festival of Lord *Jagannath* before other saints through conversation. Accordingly, *Dolarohan* (ascendancy on the *Dola Bedi*) festival is to be observed in *Falgun*. A *mandap* (pavilion), called *Dola Mandap* is to be constructed. The representative of Lord *Jagannath*, *Govinda* is to be seated on the *Dola mandap*. A beautiful and colourful surrounding of the *Mandap* like fragrance of flowers, sweet breeze from the south (*malay*), trees and creepers of green colour, singing of *Bhramar* (a large big bee) and sweet melodious voice of the cuckoo is to create the illusion of Vrindaban. Among this heart thrilling circumstances the spring festival is to be observed. This is narrated by Vyasa Deva. A devotee gets an opportunity to have a pious *Darshan* of *Radha Govind* on the *Dolamandap* and freed from the earthly bondage. He escapes from the fatal sins like *Brahmahatya* (the murder of Brahmin), *Gohatya* (cow killing) and derives spiritual joy like *Adhibhoutika* (proceeding from material causes) and *Adhidaibika* (super natural)

and is freed from the severe punishment of the hell.

To conclude, the *Chachri Besha* festival is a vibrant and colourful celebration of the deities Lord *Jagannath*, Lord *Balabhadra* and Goddess *Subhadra* and celebrated with great joy and eagerness by the people of Odisha. During this festival people of Odisha and India play *Phagu* (coloured powder) and get an opportunity to come together and celebrate their shared heritage and traditions. The spring festival reminds the importance of faith, devotion and unity among the people. It creates a spectacular environment of purity, sanctity and spirituality. The devotees are keen to see their Lord *Jagannath* in *Chacheri Besha* with a hope to get salvation (*Moksha*). Lord *Jagannath* is worshipped as *Dolagobinda* during the spring festival. So it is rightly said,

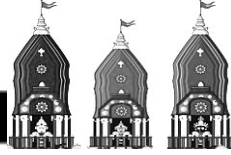
“*Dolecha Dolo Govindam / Chapecha Madhusudanam / Rathetu Bamanam Drustwa / Punarjanma Nabidyate.*”

A devotee humbly prays his Lord *Dolagobinda* and recites,

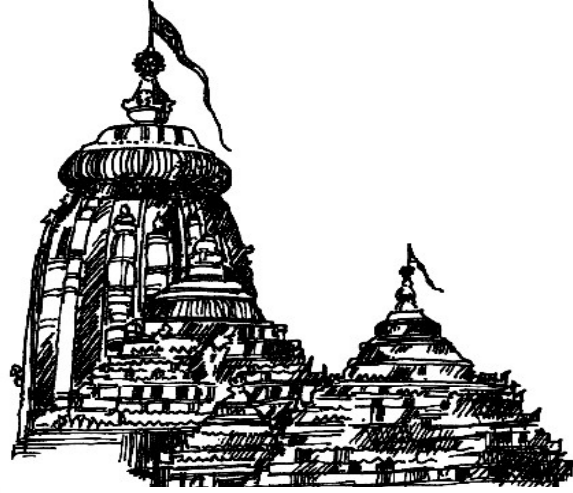
“*Shantam Chaaruhasya Badanam / Kotisurjya Samaprabham / Shankham Chakram / Gada Padmadharam, Shri, Bhu Daibeh / Sebitam Dolabedikasinam / Nanaranga shobhitam / Basant otsabaadhinayakm / Bande Sri Dolagobindam / Bhaktajana Baradam / Ranganayakam Mukundam.*”

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The temple of Jagannatha at Puri (Lat. 19° 18' 17" N; Long. 85° 51' 39" E), situated on the shores of the Bay of Bengal occupies a pivotal position in the religious history of India. The *puranas* and other Sanskrit texts refer to this holy city by various names, viz. Nilachala, Nilagiri, Niladri, Purusottama, Purusottamakshetra, Srikshetra, Sankhakshetra, Jagannathakshetra and Purusottama Puri on account of its great sanctity. According to tradition, the temple was originally built by Yayati-II of Samavamsi dynasty on the site of the present shrine. But the



Plastering and Conservation of Sri Jagannatha Temple, Puri, Odisha during Pre-colonial Era

Dr. Nanda Kishor Swain

epigraphical records fully support that it was Chodaganga Deva (*circa* 1108-1147 AD) who built the present temple in first half of 12th century AD. The temple has two big concentric walls and four entrance gateways both in outer and inner walls. The outer wall of the temple is known as *Meghanada Prachira* (203m x 195m) and the inner wall is known as *Kurma Vedha* (128m x 96m). The entrances on the eastern, southern, western and northern sides of the outer enclosure are known as *Simhadvara*, *Asvadvara*, *Vyaghradvara*, and *Hastidvara* respectively. The temple, as it stands today consists of a *rekha*

deul (sanctum) with a curvilinear *sikhara*, a *jagamohana* with a pyramidal super structure, a *nata-mandira* (hall of dancing), and a *bhoga-mandapa* (hall of offering), all in the same axial alignment. Of these, the last two structures appear to have been subsequent additions during the 15th century AD.

The Jagannatha temple at Puri, being most important religious institution of Odisha, its maintenance and repairing was an important responsibility of the Hindu rulers during the pre-colonial era. Since the construction of the great



temple during the 12th century AD, the mighty Ganga monarchs took active steps towards the administration and maintenance of the temple. The temple also flourished under the royal patronage of the Suryavamsi Gajapati kings of Odisha who were the guardians of the temple tradition and instrumental in disseminating the Jagannatha cult. However, the history of repairing and conservation of the temple during the Gangas and the succeeding Suryavamsi period is not known precisely. The *Madalapanji* records the tradition of repairing and conservation of the temple several times during the Khurdaraj family from the 16th to 19th centuries A.D. The conservation measures taken by the Khurdaraj family were mainly limited to the application of coats of lime plaster to save the damages caused to the dilapidated temple structure. Besides, the *Madalapanji* also records the uprooting and reinstallation of the *nilachakra* by devastating cyclones several times.

The Lime Plastering of the Temples

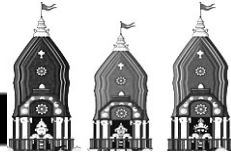
Unlike other temples, the Jagannatha Temple at Puri and its sub-shrines were covered with several coats of lime plaster. After deplastering it is found that the outer wall of the Jagannatha temple had been plastered in nine distinct layers and the average thickness of the plaster at places was more than 60 cm (Chauley, 2004: 153-163). The lime plaster grew so thick because the temple was plastered for a number of times by different kings of Khurdaraj family during the 17th – 19th centuries. But the first coat of plaster was applied during the Mughal period by the illustrious king Sri Narasimha Deva (1621-1647 AD). The temple might have been necessitated protection and maintenance during his period. By the time some portion of the temple might have been affected by the devastating saline effect of the sea thereby developing cracks on

the temple superstructure and leakage of rain water from the temple roof. The frequent cyclonic storms, lightning, etc. might have also affected the khandolite stone surface of the temple. After deplastering serious distresses and heavy strains were noticed on the outer walls of the Jagannatha Temple. A few huge blocks had either fallen or were about to fall (Chauley, 2004: 153-163) and thus as part of conservation measure the temple was covered with lime plaster.

It is evident that the Sun temple at Konark might have started collapsing during the reign of Narasimha Deva for which he caused the removal of the Moon god and the Sun god from the debris of Konark temple and placed inside the Indra temple (renamed Sun Temple) located in the compound of Jagannatha temple (Behera and Parida, 2009: 78). It is presumed that the plastering of the outer walls of the Jagannatha temple might have been initiated by Narasimha Deva apprehending the same fate as had happened in case of the tall *sikhara* of Konark temple.

Considering all these aspects Narasimha Deva plastered both the *vimana* and *mukhasala* of the Jagannatha temple with lime in his 19th regnal year (Behera and Parida, 2009 : 77). This plastering was made under the active supervision of the high officials of the state like Nila Patanayak, Narani Ray, Puri Mahapatra, Kanhai Vidyadhara Mahapatra, Banamali Paikaray Mahapatra, etc. It involved a total expenditure of 91538 *kahana*, 2 *pana*, 10 *ganda* cowries (Behera and Parida, 2009 : 77).

Due to its white washed exterior, the temple of Jagannatha was called the ‘White Pagoda’ by European sailors in contrast to the Konark temple which was named as the ‘Black



Pagoda'. Jagannatha temple is found mentioned in the diary of Sir Streynsham Master, Governor of St. Fort George, Madras in connection with a voyage in the Bay of Bengal in 1676 (Temple, 1921: 56). On December 23, 1676, Master saw the Konark temple and the Jagannatha temple and recorded, as follows "we sailed in sight of the Black Pagoda and the White Pagoda. The later is that place called Jagarnat (Jagannatha) to which the Hindus from all parts of India come on pilgrimage".

Successive coats of plaster had been applied to the temple during the period of king Harekrishna Deva (1717-1720 AD). The work was executed under the direct supervision of his officer Dharamu Harichandana Mahapatra (Behera and Parida, 2009 : 83). His time was a little peaceful period since the generous Murshid Quli Khan was the Suvedar at Cuttack. That is why such a great task of plastering could have been possible.

The Jagannatha temple was again plastered with lime by the chief queen of Virakeshari Deva (1737-1793 AD) (Behera and Parida, 2009 : 90). Coats of lime plaster was applied not only to the outer surface of the great temple and subsidiary shrines but also to the inner walls of the *garbhagriha* of the main temple. The stone paved floors of first and second storeys of *garbhagriha* were also laid with thick layer of plaster made out of surkhi, lime and sand. Perhaps it was the time when corbelled stones might have started falling down inside the *garbhagriha*. As a precautionary measure some repairing works were also undertaken in the inner storeys. The floor of second storey was covered with a 50 cm thick layer of husk and paddy in

order to create cushion effect to save the floor from the damage due to fall of the corbel stones. The lime plastering, flooring and conservation works undertaken in the interior of *garbhagriha* during this period is substantiated by the discovery of an Odia inscription in July 1991. The inscription, engraved on the south wall of first storey reads as 'Jagannatha Sarana Vira Kishor Deva' (Report on Conservation of *garbhagriha*, dated the 2nd August 1991). The period was peaceful as the Marathas had captured the administration from the Mughals. Since the Marathas were the Hindus, they could not have disturbed in this pious work. The lime plastering of the temple is corroborated by a statement in *Anuraga Kalpalata*, composed by Shyama Sundar Deva, a son of king Virakesari Deva (Mahapatra, 1969 : 207). It is mentioned in the 8th *stavaka*, *kusuma* 8 that the world became empty of lime when the great temple was plastered at the instance of the queen and that in order to meet the requirements cowrie shells had to be burnt (Mahapatra, 1969 : 207).

Thus it is evident that the Jagannatha temple was plastered for a number of times by different kings. The ancients would not have repeatedly plastered the temple, had not the original surface shown signs of disrepair either on account of the rusting of the iron clamps or by the action of salinity brought about by sea breezes. There is no doubt that the coating of plaster, acting as protective cover against salinity and wind blasts, had rendered the structure stable and had also arrested its decay and disintegration in as much as it was possible with the expertise and resources available. But at the same time, the plaster work had completely obscured the structural outlines and details of surface treatment.



The Re-installation of *Nilachakra* atop the Great Temple

The Jagannatha temple at Puri, located in the eastern coast of India is highly vulnerable to tropical cyclones. Tropical cyclones have always been associated with large scale devastation resulting in enormous loss of life and property. The *Madalapani* records a number of instances of deadly cyclones with highest catastrophe and death tolls that occurred in this region. The impact of these cyclones on the temple of Jagannatha was devastating. Many times it is found that the *nilachakra* i.e. the metallic blue disc on the spire of the temple was dislodged or broken by the storm and it was again fixed on the temple.

For the first time the *nilachakra* was uprooted from the top of the temple and fell down to the ground during the 17th *anka* of the reign of the Ganga king Bhanumana or Nisanka Bhanu Deva due to a severe cyclone on the day of *Odhana Sasthi* (Behera and Parida, 2009: 48-49). During the 34th *anka* of the reign of Ramachandra Deva I (1568-1600 AD) of Bhoi dynasty, on the 16th day of the solar month of Kumbha (Aquarius), Damodara Champatiraya, the son of *Pariksa* Badajera Mahapatra fixed up the *nilachakra* on the top of great temple in *udisthani* (Behera and Parida, 2009 : 73), which was blown down by a strong gale (Behera and Parida, 2009 : 74).

The *nilachakra* of the Jagannatha temple was once again dismantled being heated by a severe cyclone on the 20th day of the solar month of Tula (=Libra) on Saturday (6th October, 1694 (Mahapatra, 1969: 133) during the 9th *anka* of the reign of Bhoi king of Khurda Divyasimha Deva I (1688-1716) (Behera and Parida, 2009 :

81). The force of the cyclone was so strong that the *nilachakra* was broken into pieces and it fell in the ground in front of the Bhandra Ganapati shrine, located to the west of the great temple. Even the stone *chakras* from the top of other temples and serrated battlements (*kangulas*) from the two concentric enclosure walls also fell down. The cyclone played havoc by causing huge damage to the houses of the people and killing large number of man and animals. The year immediately following the cyclone saw scarcity in the kingdom. Scarcity of rice led people to eat human flesh (Behera and Parida, 2009: 81).

However, it took nearly 20 years to build a *nilachakra* (Plate 1) afresh and was again fixed up on the temple as is evident by an inscription (Fig.1 & Plate 2) engraved on its inner wheel. Both the script and language of the inscription is Odia. It reads as follows:

Line

Text

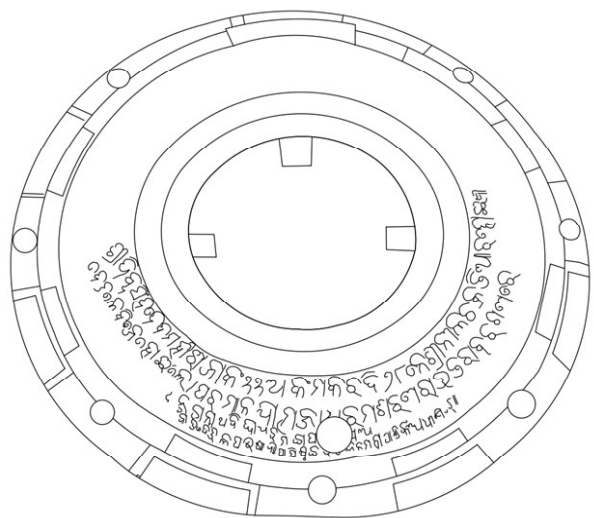
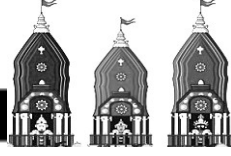


Fig. 1. Jagannatha temple: *garbhagriha*, *nilachakra*, inscription.



1. *"Sri Divyasimha Deva maharajanka
33 anka makara di 28 ne Sri
Nilachakra tiari hoi ba(da)*
2. *deule vije hoile I Paramanandatmaja
Dharama Sarana Rautrabara ganare*



Plate 1: *Nilachakra*
Sri Jagannatha Temple, Puri

This inscription states that in the 33rd *anka* of the reign of Maharaja Divyasimhadeva, on the 28th day of the solar month of Makara (= Capricorn) a new *nilachakra* was made and installed on the top of the great temple. This reinstallation work was executed in the presence of Dharama Sarana Rautraya, son of Paramananda and under the supervision of temple Pariksa (Superintendent) Krupasindhu Harichandan Mahapatra, son of late Jagannatha Vidyadhara Mahapatra.



Plate 2: Inscription of
Divyasimhadeva on *Nilachakra*
Sri Jagannatha Temple, Puri

(Courtesy: Archaeological Survey of India)

3. *U Jagannatha Vidyadhara Mahapatra
pua*
4. *bada deula Pariksha Krupasindhu
Harichandan Mahapatranka
adhikshako I "*

Dr. Nanda Kishor Swain, Superintending
Archaeologist, Archaeological Survey of India,
Guwahati Circle, Assam, Mob : 8249873384.





Sri Jagannath is the only God in the universe without having any gender and is called genderless God. Jagannath represents “Parambrahma” or “Paramatma” because Atma or Brahma has no gender. Many people opined differently, some say Lord Jagannath is the black Planet ‘saturn’, some say He is “Kali” the force and source of feminine, others say He is the Brahma, Vishnu, Maheswar or Shristi, Sthithi and Vilaya, some describe Jagannath as the “Kala” meaning ‘Time’ as time has no gender while some ascribe Him as “Mahavishnu” or “Purusottam” the best in human form.



Lord Jagannath All in One

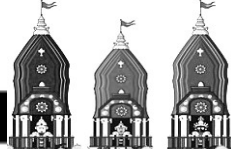
Uma Shankar Prasad

Sri Jagannath is not associated with religion but related to literature, Art, Politics, Culture, Astrology, Vastu, Tantra and Jantra. The glory, speciality and sanctity of Shree Jagannath and His Kshetra find mention in many Purans like the Matsya Puran, Brahma Puran, Narad Puran, Padma Puran, Kapila Samhita and the Utkal Khanda of Skanda Puran. Lord Jagannath is the life blood of each study and is a subject starting from the cosmic World to small molecular spirit.

The study of Lord Jagannath originates with the origin of the universe. In the opinion of

Astrologers or the Astroscientists there are 9 (nine) Planets, Ravi, Chandra, Mangal, Budha, Brihaspati, Sukra, Sani, Rahu, Ketu, known as Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn Rahu & Ketu all are found in Jagannath.

There planets are compulsorily influencing the living world and the living being of the universe. Lord Jagannath being the Lord of universe, is directly or indirectly related to this Astro-Solar system such as :- 1) The two large rounded eyes of Lord Jagannath represent The Sun and The Moon that is Surya and the Chandra. 2) Blood



red lips of Lord Jagannath represents Mangal or “Mars” 3) In the Chariot Jagannath in the form of “Bamana” represents ‘Buddha’ the dwarf planet or you can call the symbol of wisdom & knowledge. 4) In yellow clothes and golden decorated costumes Lord Jagannath represent Bruhaspati (Jupiter). 5) The quality of art of love of Jagannath represents for Venus. 6) The black colour of Lord Jagannath represents ‘Saturn’. 7) The unfinished body of Lord Jagannath represents the incompleted Planets of Rahu and Ketu.

as Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra represents for Lagna, Rashi and Nakshatra (the Ascendent, the moon sign and the star sign) or Jiban, Jouban and Mrutyu, (Life, youth and death) or Jala, Sthala and Akash (Land, Water, and Sky), the Day, Evening and Night. So Jagannath is also called as the Lord of creation, operation and destruction. Hence My Lord is all in one and also a creator of Astronomy World.

Thus Lord Jagannath represents for the universe or ‘Brahmanda’. The three deities known

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*“Ugram viram maha-Vishnu jwalantam
sarvato mukham
Nrisingham bhisanam bhadram mrityur
mrityum namamyaham”*

“*Srimad Bhagabat Mahaapuram*”, one of the eighteen *Mahapurans* is the first script to describe Nrusingha incarnation of lord Vishnu in its seventh *Skanda* (chapter). Later on a special *puran* was written on God Nrusingha in the name “*Nrusingha Puran*”, which is one of the *Upapuranas* of Hinduism. Vaisnavism got its royal patronization of the Gupta rulers and with

worshipped in *Srimandir*, Puri prior to the installation of *Darubrahma* (Wooden idol). According to the ‘*Purusottam Mahatmya*’ and “*Skanda Puran*”, with the request of Indradyumna, Brahma performed a *Yajna* at *Janmabedi* i.e. *Sri Gundicha Mandir*. Indradyumna saw the appearance of God Nrusingha in the fire and named *Adi Nrusingha* due to his first appearance. Now the same God is worshipped in the *Adi Nrusingh* temple near *Gundicha Mandira*, Puri. *Adi Nrusingha* is the original presiding deity of *Jagannath Dham* before installation of Jagannath.² So in every ritual



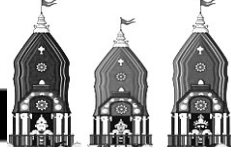
Sri Jagannath and Nrusingh Culture

Dr. Chittaranjan Mishra



the invasion of Samudragupta to Odisha Vaishnavism entered into this soil, but it is evident from epigraphic records that Vaisnavism got its rise in the land of Odisha during the reign of Mathara dynasty in fifth century A.D. as Nongondi copper plate grant declares Prabhanjanvarman as “*Bhagabata swami Narayana padanu dhyayatah*”, Nanda Prabhanjanvarman titled himself as “*Parama Bhagabat*” and Chand Verma as devotee of Vishnu in Chicacole copper plate and Bobili charter respectively.¹ Where as Nrusingh worship is concern it is evident that *Adi Nrusingh* was

of Jagannath temple first offering has been done to God Nrusingha. From that time God Nrusingh has been worshipped in Odisha by different names like *Adi Nrusingh*, *Jagya Nrusingha*, *Nrusingh*, *Badi Nrusingh*, *Laxmi Nrusingh*, *Khamba Nrusingh* (first pillar of *Jagamohan*, Jagannath temple Puri), *Silagram Nrusingha* (Jenapur matha, near Brahmani river), *Patali Nrusingh*, *Mahanarasingha*, *Nisa Nrusingha*, *Mukta Nrusingha*, *Chakra Narasingha*³ in the form of *Ugra*, *Krodha*, *Vira*, *Vilamba*, *Kopa*, *Yoga*, *Aghora*, *Sudarshan* and *Laxmi Nrusingha*. About fifty Nrusingha images are worshipped in



different places of Jaganntha temple, Puri and 21 numbers of Nrusingha temples are also there in Puri district. The wooden idol of lord Jagannath also resembles with the Nrusingha image having square size head, round big eyes which indicates an angry look and the hands advancing frontward as if the Nrusingha posture of disemboweling the demon Hiranyakasyap. Lord Jagannath is described as terrific, danger looking God Nrusingha in a prayer of “*Skanda Puran*”.

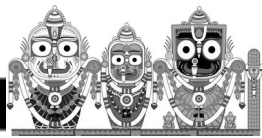
“*Tatah sa bhagaban mantra mahima nara
kesari
Indradyumnadibhih sarberdadruseadbhuta
darsanah*”⁴

It again describes that Life was infused in the idol of Sri Jagannath on the presence of *Swati nakshatra* in Odia calendar *Jyestha Sukla dwadasi* (2nd day of the bright fortnight of Odia month *Jyestha*). *Baisakh sukla Chaturdasi* (14th day of bright fortnight of Odia month *Baisakh*) is considered as the suitable day for Nrusingha worship, it is also named as *Nrusingh Chaturdasi*. A new philosophy of Vaishnavism emerges with the combination of Vedic God Vishnu, God of philosophy Sri Narayana and historical God Basudev in northern part of India prior to the creation of Sanskrit “*Bhagabat Mahapurana*”. This new philosophy slowly entered into central and East India after Gupta rule and also slowly established its influence over Saivite Odisha. They used the term Purusottam for Lord Vishnu and in 12th century A.D. it reached at the apex of the glory after establishment of Jagannath temple at Puri by Chodaganga Dev. In 13th century A.D. Ganga rulers converted from *Saiva* to *Vaisnava*. The Inscription of Sirpur Laxman temple, a brick temple, probably built by Saravapuriyas in 8th century C.E. provides evidence of a prayer to

God Narasingha as *Purusottam*, the tutelary deity of the royal family. Being influenced by this culture Ganga rulers integrated Lord Vishnu, Narasingh and Purusottam with Jagannath and later on two other Gods Ram and Krishna also combined with Jagannath.⁵

The ‘*Mahabharat*’, ‘*Bayu puran*’, ‘*Haribansa*’, ‘*Brahma puran*’, ‘*Ahimbuddhnya*’, ‘*Samhita*’, ‘*Srimad Bhagbat Mahapurana*’, ‘*Satpath Brahman*’, ‘*Taiteriy Brahman*’, ‘*Garuda Puran*’, ‘*Agni Puran*’, ‘*Nrusingha Puran*’, ‘*Aarnyak*’, ‘*Srimad Bhagbat Geeta*’, ‘*Mahanarayan*’, ‘*Nrusingh (Purba and Uttar) Tapini*’, ‘*Sruti Prakarana*’ of ‘*Manusamhita*’ etc. Sanskrit epics vividly describe the story of God Nrusingha. Creation of ‘*Sri Sri Vishnu satnam stotra*’, ‘*Vishnu sahasranam stotra*’, ‘*Sankata nasana Laxmi Nrusingh stotra*’, ‘*Laxmi-Nrusinghostattara satnam stotra*’, ‘*Dasabatar stotram*’, ‘*Dasabatara abirbhava*’, ‘*Dasabatrabirbhab kalakathanam*’, ‘*Abatara stotrani*’, ‘*Nrusingha stotra*’, ‘*Saligram stotram*’, and ‘*Nrusingha Kabacha*’ etc. Sanskrit prayers, spells and glories show the popularity of God Nrusingh.⁶

In Odia literature we also find the glory of God Nrusingha in ‘*Bhisma Parva*’ of the ‘*Sarala Mahabharat*’, ‘*Mangalacharan*’ of ‘*Harivamsa*’ by Bipra Narayana Das, ‘*Saptam Skanda*’ and ‘*Dasam Skanda*’ of Odia ‘*Bhagabat*’ by Jagannath Das, ‘*Mangalacharan*’ in ‘*Saptakhanda Haribansa*’ by Achyutananda Das, ‘*Vishnu-Keshari Puran*’ by Mahadev Das of Ganjam, ‘*Nrusingha Puran*’ by Bipra Pitambara Das, ‘*Gunasagara*’ by Dinakrishna Das, ‘*Krushnakeshari Puran*’ by Narayana Rayaguru, ‘*Bichitra Nrusingha*



Puran by Dasarathi Mishra of Chandrasekhar Pur, Puri, '*Nrusingha Mahatmya*' by Jogadas of Western Odisha, '*Dasavatara*' in '*Geetagevinda*' of Jayadev, '*Prahlada Natak*' by Ramakrishna Chhotaray, king of Jalantara etc. glorify the God Nrusingha.⁷

It is evident from the names of different Early Ganga rulers that they were the ardent devotee of God Nrusingha. Out of 27 Ganga rulers seven rulers add term Nrusingha with their original names such as: 8th ruler-Nrusingha, 9th—Bhima Nrusingha, 10—Purusottam Nrusingha, 11th—Kabi Nrusingha, 12th—Akata Abata Nrusingha, 13th—Pratap Nrusingha. Dasagoba copper plate grant of Rajaraj III (son of Chodaganga Dev) issued in the year 1198 C.E. says that LaxmiNrusingha was the tutelary deity of the Ganga family. Other Gangavansi rulers having *Nrusingh* with their name were Langula Narasingha Dev, Narasingha Dev I, Narasingha Dev II etc.⁸

Analyst Sridhara Swami offers his prayer to God Nrusingha in the '*mangalacharan*' of his analytical '*Srimad Bhagabat*' as:

*"Bagisha Yasya badane laxmirjasya cha
Bakshyasi
Yasyaste hrudaye sambit tam
Nrusinghamahm vande"*⁹

Jagannath Das also offers his prayer to God Nrusingha in Odia '*Bhagabat*' as:

*"Namai Nrusingha Charan
Anadi param karan"*¹⁰

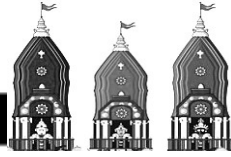
*(Srimad Bhagabat Mahapurana, Saptama
Skandha, Prathama Pada)*

In course of time Nrusingh culture migrates to different districts of Odisha in different

times by different devotees and it also reached in the high land of Kandhamal probably in 19th century A.D.

Kandhamal a centrally located district of Odisha, situates within the Deccan plateau to the west of the Eastern Ghats. It lies between 19° 34' North 20° 36' North latitude and 83° 34' East 84° 34' East longitude sharing boundaries with Boudh district in north, Rayagada in the south, Kalahandi in the west and Ganjam and Nayagarh in the east. It has 8021 square kilometers of geographical area including 5610 square kilometers of forest region stands at a height of 300 to 1100 meters from the sea level. According to the census report of 2011 it has a population of 733,110 with 359,945 males and 373,165 females. It is a tribal district with 53.58% scheduled tribe population out of the total population of the district and among the Tribes, Kandha only consists 93.33%. "Kandhas" identify themselves as '*Kuinga*' in plural usage and *Kuenju/Kuilogu* in singular form, as they are high Landers or high dwellers. The word '*Kui*' means upper or high and they also prefer to live on hills and mountains.¹¹

Kandha culture is man-nature and spirit complex. They are the worshippers of the nature. They considered all natural elements around them have supernatural powers, so all are gods. That's why they worship natural elements out of fear and obligation. They worship *Darni penu/tana penu* (Earth God), *Saru penu* (Mountain God), *Suga Penu* (Water God), *Turki penu* (God of garbage), *Bela penu* (Sun God), *Gassa penu* (Forest God), *Pidaju penu* (Rain God), *Danju penu* (Moon God), *Burbi penu* (God of first fruit), *Sandi penu* (God of boundary), *Jori penu/Gangi penu* (River God) and *Bura penu* (Ancient/old God) etc. in addition to these gods they also worship *Pideri*



penu (ancestors) and *Meriah* soul expecting well-being, peace, prosperity and safety from different diseases and wild attacks.¹² They have their special way of worship. Kandhas use to offer rice, wine, different fruits and foods and animal sacrifice to their gods and goddesses while performing rites and rituals. They adopt and worship some other Gods and Goddesses of different outer communities. *Stambeswari*, *Baraladevi*, *Patakhandi*, *Pitabali*, *Kali*, *Siva*, *Nrusingha*, *Jagannath* etc. are some of the examples, though *Stambeswari* and *Pitabali* are taken into consideration as tribal deities by some scholars.

Kandhas are very brave but very God fearing in nature. They have two types of Gods and Goddesses such as benevolent and malevolent. Benevolent are positive in nature and Malevolent are negative, i.e. cause of all miseries, diseases, problems, death etc. *Dehuri*, *Disari*, *Jhankar*, *Jani*, *Tlamba*, *Bejuni*, *Matiguru*, *Kutak* and *Gurugunia* are the name of different priesthood in their special fields.¹³ They use to chant sacred spells while performing rites and rituals which are composed in their dialect '*kui*'. But With the migration of outsiders, alien faiths and religions infiltrated into the land of nature worshippers (aboriginals). Buddhism entered into this high land after conquest of Kalinga by Asoka, Shaktism made its entry in 5th century C.E. during the reign of Tustikar of Parvatdwarak dynasty, who ruled over Boudh, Kandhamal, Ghumusar, Sonepur, Kalahandi and Koraput region. He identified himself as *Stambeswari Padabhakta*. Saivism stepped into this land in 9th century C.E. and Dungi Buddhist sanctum was transformed into a Saiva sanctum when Bhanjas established Banjulwak. Vaishnavism got its access into this up land when Dinabandhu Pattanaik took over the charge of Tahasildar of Kandhamal region in

1855 A.D. and other officials of the Company were recruited from Rasulkonda (Bhanjanagar) region. These plain land people brought with them *Vaishnava* Culture through different Vaishnav literatures like '*Srimad Bhagabat*', '*Harivansa*', the '*Mahabharat*', the '*Ramayana*', '*Nrusingha Puran*', '*Ramalila*', and '*Vishnukeshari puran*' etc. to this high land and used to read regularly in different village *Mandapas*. *Kirtan mandalis* were organized to chant *Mahamantra*, which worked as the most influential force for popularization of Vaishnavism among the tribes of Kandhamal.

Nrusingha Culture in Kandhamal:

There are a number of Nrusingh *Gadis* (a bunch of palm leaf manuscripts of *Nrusingh Puran*) worshipped in different villages of Kandhamal district. The shrine, in which *Nrusingh Gadi* placed, is called *Ghudi* (hut) or *Mandap* (platform). Podapada, Nuapada, Kelapada, Telapali, Dindragam village of Phiringia block and Jhagadapata, Dalapada, Baikumpa, Anduguda, Raikhola, Gudari village of Khajuripada block have *Nrusingha Ghudis* or *Mandaps*, Keredi, Jiringipada Street of Phulabani and Bhagamunda village of Baliguda block have Nrusingh temples. The story of Hiranyakasipu and Prahllad has been performed by the villagers of Banduli, Telapali, Paranga, Dalapada, Anduguda, Kukurukumpa, Raikhola, Jhagadapata and Sriguni in the form of a folk play named '*Nrusingha Nata*' / '*Raja Nata*' / '*Prahllad Nata*' being inspired by the famous folk drama "*Raja Nata*" or "*Prahallad Nata*" of Ganjam district. Almost all manuscripts worshipped in Kandhamal district are having the *Bhanati* (writer's identity at the end of a chapter in poetic style) in the name of Bipra Pitambar Das. He was the only writer of the book titled as



“*Nrusingh Puran*” though some others also wrote the story of Hiranyakasipu and Prahlad but they named their books differently like ‘*Krishna Keshari Puran*’, ‘*Vishnu Keshari Puran*’ or ‘*Bichitra Nrusingh Puran*’ etc. Bipra Pitambar Das was born on 1735 A.D. in Tanhara village near the River Rushikulya. He describes in the *puran* as:

“*Birakeshari Devanka batish ankare
Singha masa sukla paksha panchami tithire
Somabaara hoithilaa asina se din
mo agare ubha hoi boile esan
Nrusingha puran granth kara tuhi ebe
Suni pasha sarbajana papun mukti hebe*”¹⁴

It was the 32 *Anka* (Regnal Year) of Birakeshari Dev, the *Gajapati* of Puri, *Singha maasa Sukla Paksha Panchami*, *Somabara* (Monday) i.e. on fifth day of the bright fortnight of Odia month *Bhadra* (August-September) Bipra Pitambar Das got blessing and order of Saraswati, the Goddess of Knowledge in a dream to write *Nrusingha Puran*. There after he started writing of this epic. After calculation scholars came into the conclusion that Birakeshari Dev II and Birakeshari Dev III Ruled over Khurda for a period of 4 years and 14 years respectively. But Birakeshari Dev I ruled for such a long period of more than 32 years. 32nd regnal year of Birakeshari Dev I began from *Sunia* (beginning day of a new month) i.e. 11th September, 1761 A.D. to *Bhadra Sukla Ekadasi* i.e. 30th August, 1762. As per calculation 23rd August 1762 was the *Singha maasa Sukla Paksha Panchami tithi*. Again Bipra Pitambar Das declares that he started writing *Nrusingh Puran* at the age of 27:

“*Sadhu janamane mora nagheniba dosa
Lekhibaa bele bayasa mora sataisa*”¹⁵

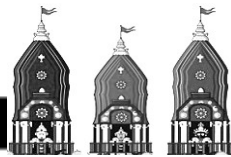
If we deduct 27 years from 1762, it was 1735 A.D., the birth year of Pitambar Das. He named each chapter as *Sagar*. By some scholars it is mentioned as *Ratnakara*, the other name of *Sagar*. He took 4 years to complete the first *Sagar*. Whole epic consisted of seven *Sagar*s (chapters). Scholars have their calculation that it must take 17 to 20 years to complete seven chaptered whole epic. He might have completed the *puran* in between 1779 to 1782. He has given description of his birth place as:

“*Muhin Bipra Pitambar ate naradhama
Rusikulya nadi tate ate mora grama
Galani sapta purus baishnav matare
Rahichhi mun matha bandhi Rusikulya tire*”

His grandson Gouranga gives clear narrative of his village in his creation “*Damodar Puran*” as:

“*Jambu dwipa Bhrata khanda saraswata
bhumi
Madhya Kalinga desa madhyam prastami
Utkal desa sima alapa tadanta
Kalinga desara utara prasasta
Nilanchalaku patha dwadasa juna chhada
Rusikulya nadi tate asrama mora tada
Purbakhanda paragana tanhar boli grama
Pitru pitanka kalu mo tanhire asrama*”¹⁶

All these narratives conclude that Tanhara village on the bank of the River Rusikulya of Ganjam district was the birth place of Bipra Pitambar, the writer of ‘*Nrusingha Puran*’. All these descriptions clearly indicate and provide evidences that *Nrusingha Puran* was migrated from Ganjam district to Kandhamal district in the last decade of 18th century C.E. after completion of a copy of palm leaf manuscripts. In some *mandaps* of Kandhamal, Odia ‘*Harivamsa*



puran’ and ‘*Srimad Bhagabata mahapuram*’ are also placed for worship along with ‘*Nrusingha Puran*’. It is the opinion of the local people that all these *Puranas* were placed in the village *mandaps* to control theft, robbery and other criminal activities and to find out the culprit through *pramana* or *niyama* (prove of one’s innocence and non involvement in criminal activities and to find out the culprit) in the *mandap*. Local people called this *Mandap* as *Ghudi*.

Podapada Nrusingha Mandap:

After careful observation of different *Nrusingha Mandaps*, I came to conclusion that Podapada *Nrusingha Gadi* is the oldest one. Podapada is a village located at a distance of eight kms from Phiringia block, on the state highway running from Phulbani to Baliguda. Podapada *Nrusingha Mandap* is a wooden heritage treasure of Kandhamal district. Whole *mandap* is constructed by wood with beautiful and decorative carvings of *Saptavatara* (*Matsya, Kaschya, Varaha, Nrusingha, Bamana, Parsuram and Ram*) of Lord Vishnu, elephant, horse, lion, bear, tiger, *Bidala, Gajasingha*, parrot, peacock, swan, beautiful decorative wooden doors, wooden pillars and a panel of erotic human figures showing women having sexual intercourse with multiple men on the front arch and above the arch on a panel figures of *Gaja-Singha* (Lion and elephant) is depicted and at the top a figure of a women is engraved showing her open virginal with the help of her two hands. Lord Nrusingha is placed on a coiling wooden cobra in the form of a lion head with terrific eyes, open mouth showing teeth and long tongue approaching outward, protected by seven hoods of the coiled cobra along with the palm leaf manuscript of *Nrusingh Puran* and *Harivamsa Puran*. People from different parts

of this district and outside district used to visit this *mandap* with a wish to get back their lost items, to settle their disturbed relations and to find out the culprit by the grace of Lord *Nrusingh*. People have a great faith and fear to this God. The erotic figures and people’s differential purpose of worship indicates that it was a Tantric shrine at its beginning. It is the most beautiful wooden *Nrusingha mandap* I ever seen. Shri Lingaraj Nanda, the priest of this *Mandap* performs daily rituals. Every Saturday is observed as the special day of worship and on *Nrusingha Chaturdasi* a grand festival has been observed by the locality with a grand procession of Nrusigha idol every year.¹⁷

After careful observation of the *mandap* and the time period of the ‘*Nrusingh Puran*’ I came into the conclusion that the builder of this Mandap was Srikara Bhanja (1790-1799 and 1819-1832), the 57th king of Ghumusar state. Srikara Bhanja was a great patron of art and culture. He constructed the famous “Biranchi Narayan” temple of Buguda, popularly known as ‘Katha Konark’ and the Raghunath Temple of Natagam, near Bhanjanagar, famous for its wooden heritage. I paid my visit to explore the history of this Ghudi. Later on I again paid my second visit with the request of Dr. T. N. Senapati, lecturer in History, K.I.G.M. College, Linepada and Dr. Sujit Kumar Panda, Government College, Phulabani to show them the wooden artifacts of Podapada Nrusingh Gadi. I showed this historical heritage site to Dr. Manmath Padhy, former Vice-Chancellor, Khallikote University, Berhampur, Dr. Prasanna Kumar Swain, the present Vice-Chancellor, University of Culture, Odisha, Bhubaneswar, Dr. Sadananda Nayak, Associate Professor and Dr. Sankarshan Mallick, Associate Professor, Department of



History, Berhampur University, Berhampur on 11.02.23.



(Nrusingha Idol of Podapada Nrusingha Ghudi)

Nuapada Nrusingha Mandap:

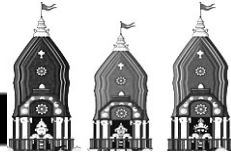
Nuapada is another village of Phiringia block situated at a distance of five kilometers from Phiringia on the way to Nuapadara and Sadingia village. The villagers have a century old *Nrusingha Ghudi* at the middle of the village. They used to worship palm leaf manuscripts of *Nrusingha Puran*, written by Pitambar Das and *Srimad Bhagabat Mahapuran* of Jagannath Das on the mandap. Villagers offer special Puja on every *Sankranti* (first day of the solar month) with *Nrusingha Janma* i.e. on *Nrusingha Chaturdasi*, *Janmastami*, *Dolapurnima* etc. as annual festival of the *Ghudi*. Shri Balakrishna Bhukta family performs the daily ritual of lord Nrusingha in this village.¹⁸



(Nuapada Nrusingha Gadi)

Dindiragam Nrusingha Mandap:

Dindiragam village is situated at a distance of two kilometers from Phiringia and 25 kilometers from Phulabani on Cuttack – Bhavanipatna state highway. Shri Basanta Mahananda is the founder of *Nrusingha Ghudi* at Dindiragam. He is a Vaishnava initiative from his very childhood and a regular reader of *Nrusingha Puran*, written by Bipra Pitambar Das. 12 years back he constructed a Wooden Idol of *Nrusingh* head by a wooden artisan of Kelapada, named Kedar Bhukta and placed it on a *Ghudi* amidst the *Dalit* habitation of his village and used to perform its daily ritual. Now by his strong effort a special temple is under construction on the road side of the state highway in between Dindiragam and Phiringia. He also worked as a social activist to cure different diseases, to solve family problems by the grace



of Lord *Nrusingha*. Though it is not widely accepted by the educated mass of the society but the faith on spiritual power works just like the placebo treatment and enhances psychological power of the sufferer.¹⁹



(*Nrusingha* Idol, Dindiragam)

Kelapada *Nrusingha Gadi*:

Being inspired by the villagers of Nuapada the villagers of Kelapada established *Nrusingha Puran* and *Harivamsa Puran* in their village. It is also a century old *Nrusingha Gadi*. Daily ritual is performed by Bhole Nanda and Mangulu Nanda and every year *Nrusingha Chaturdasi* has been observed in pomp and pleasure. Kelapada is situated at a distance of 8 kilometers from Phiringia on the way to Nuapadar and Sadingia.²⁰

Telapali *Nrusingh Ghudi*:

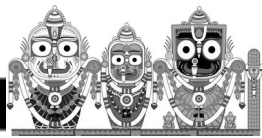
Villagers of Telapali were inspired by the *Nrusingha Gadi* of Baikumpa of Khajuripada block and borrowed an Idol of *Nrusingha* head from there about a hundred years back and constructed a *Nrusingh Mandap* to place the idol along with the palm leaf manuscript of *Nrusingh Puran*. Sri Basanta Mallick has entrusted the job of offering *Puja* on every Monday and villagers used to organize a *mela* (mass worship) on each Sunday evening. Every year *Nrusingha Chaturdasi* has been observed with great enthusiasm.²¹

Gudari *Nrusingha Gadi*:

Gudari is situated at a distance of five kilometer from district headquarters Phulbani on the highway from Phulbani to Bhubaneswar. It is a century old *Nrusingh Gadi* established by the forefathers of Shri Sudam Kumar Behera, Lecturer in English of Panchayat Degree college, Phiringia.²²

Anduguda *Nrusingha Gadi* was established by the forefathers of late Simanchal Das, lecturer in Political Science of K.I.G.M College, Linepada. Other places of Khajuripada block, where *Nrusingh Gadi*s established are Jhagadapata, Dalapada, Baikumpa, Keredi and Raikhol with *Nrusingha* Idol. Some of these villages of this block migrates to different nearby villages with Lord *Nrusingh* and performs *puja* there during the month of *Baisakha* to spread *Nrusingh* culture.²³

Recently (within two to three years) a *Nrusingh* temple is constructed by the Bhagamunda villagers of Baliguda block and established God *Nrusingha* along with Goddess



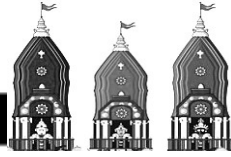
Tarini in a single campus and Jiringipada street of Phulbani town also has a *Lakshmi-Nrusingha* temple. *Nrusingha Chaturdasi* has been observed in grand pomp and pleasure in these temples.

This is the story of the spread of *Nrusingha* culture in the high land of Kandhamal. Human migration not only brings a group of new people into a new society but it also gives asses to a new culture enter into this society. As a result a cultural assimilation, cultural interaction and cultural intercourse take place between these two groups of people. This happened in this high land. Cultural assimilation, interaction and intercourse of tribal and non tribal gave birth to a mingled culture. *Mahamantra Kirtan, Bhagabat Katha prabachan*, observation of *Dola, Holi, Janmastami, Nrusingha Janma*, performance of *Nrusingha Nata/Raja Nata/Prahlad Nata* and *Lakshmi Suanga* etc. entered into the culture of Kandhamal and at the same time worship of tribal Gods and Goddesses and observation of tribal festivals are also accepted by the non tribal people. In course of time *tantricism* entered into *Nrusingha* worship and they used this *Nrusingha Gadi* and *Harivamsa Gadi* for the purpose of *Pramana/Niyam* to find out the culprit involved in theft, rubbery, murder and other criminal activities.

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16. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
17. Personal interaction with Lingaraj Nanda, the priest of Podapada *Nrusingha Gadi*.
18. Personal discussion with Balakrishna Bhukta, the priest of *Nrusingha Gadi*, Nuapada.
19. Personal discussion with Basanta Mahananda, Founder of *Nrusingha Idol*, Dindiragam.
20. Personal discussion with Lakshmikanta Sahu, PET, Panchayat Junior College, Phiringia and an inhabitant of Gerupada, near Kelapada.
21. Data from Basanta Mallick, Priest of *Nrusingha Gadi*, Telapali.
22. Personal discussion with Sudam Kumar Behera, Lecturer in English, Panchayat Degree College, Phiringia, an inhabitant of Gudari village and belong to founder family of *Nrusingha Gadi*, Gudari.
23. Personal discussion with Haribandhu Panda, an ardent devotee of God *Nrusingha* and an inhabitant of Khajuripada.

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Parambrahma Purushottam Shri Jagannath attracts millions from across the globe to His abode The Holy Neelachaladham every year who are in search of realising the supreme divinity. Lord Jagannath as the centre of all consciousness signaling the convergence of all faiths and beliefs, stands for a grand composite culture transcending all boundaries perceived by human mind. He is Jaganta, the tree God for tribals, Goutam Buddha for Buddhists, Rishabh Nath for Jains, Shiva for Saivas, Shakti for Saktas, Vishnu for Vaishnavas, Ganesha for Ganapatyas, Sun God for Sauras. The preachers and monks of all sects and beliefs

of worship, Jakeri Penu, Tana Penu and Murabi Penu might have been worshipped over the time as Balabhadra, Subhadra and Jagannath. In the ancient times, it is believed that the Supreme Lord was being worshipped in the name of Neelamadhab by Biswabasu, the king of Savar tribal community inside the dense forest situated near the eastern coast of India. Maharaja Indradyumna had sent the royal priest Bidyapati to trace the Lord. Bidyapati married Lalita, daughter of Biswabasu and with her help could get the opportunity to have darshan of Neelamadhab and also got to know the route to the deity's place inside the forest. When King



Jagannath Culture : A Divine Melting Pot

Laxmi Narayan Mallik

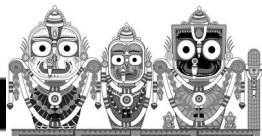


have found the trace of their tutelary God in this mysterious deity seated on Ratnabedi, is known to the world as Darubrahma Patitapaban Shri Jagannath. He is not the presiding deity of any particular sect or religion, rather He is the Omnipresent form of the humanity, spreading the message of universal peace and brotherhood, tolerance and co-existence from time immemorial.

In Adivasi culture there are references to Tridev worship. The deities are known as Jakeri Penu, Tana Penu and Murabi Penu, representing the spiritual culture of the tribals. In a steady but gradual metamorphic transformation in their mode

Indradyumna came to have darshan of the Lord in that secret path, the Lord vanished from His seat miraculously and instructed the king to fetch Him from the sea in the form of a wooden log and give shape to it for worship. As per the divine destiny the log of wood was found by the king from the sea at Puri and Lord Vishwakarma in the guise of an old carpenter gave the shape of Chaturddhamurti out of the wooden log.

From this description it is clear that Jagannath is originally the ancient tribal deity worshipped by Savaras. He has been described as Neelaksha in the Skanda Purana.



The tribal community who are dependent on the forest products for their livelihood sustenance treat trees as their God and Goddess. Later the tree-worship has been adopted by both Aryas and Dravids. Probably to give respect to this ritual, king Indradyumna had constructed the deities from wood in place of metals or stones and also recognised the tribal sevakas in performing various rituals inside the temple that he built. Jaganta of Savaras became Jagannath, Ananta became Balabhadra and Khambeswari became Devi Subhadra.

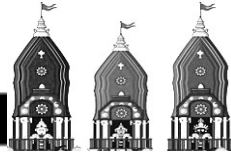
The role of Buddhist culture is also very important like Savara culture in the development of Sri Jagannath consciousness. Some believe that Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra have their origin from the Triratna of Buddhism, i.e., Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha. Buddha wheel is the main for object of worship in Buddha Vihar which has been compared with Sudarshan Chakra. On the basis of Dathavamsa, a Palli chronicle containing the history and popular traditions associated with the relic of the tooth of the Buddha, the traditions are linked with many rituals of Lord Jagannath. As per some historians, after the Kalinga War, along with Maurya King Ashoka, large number of inhabitants of Kalinga and Savara community became followers of Buddhism and from there emanated the idea of Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha in the three idols of Savaras. Some scholars opined that there was the importance of car festival in Buddha culture. The tradition of taking out Buddha Relic in procession and to return back after six days has much similarity with the Rath Yatra of Puri.

In the spiritual life of ancient Odisha, Jainism was having lot of significance for a considerable period of time. It was enjoying the royal patronage in Kalinga in the first century BC during the reign of Samrat Kharavela and thus

had lot of influence on the culture and rituals of Lord Jagannath. It is mentioned in Abhidhana Rajendra, the Jain scripture that Jagannath was another name of the Jeeneswar or the first Jeen Rishabhath. It is believed that the Triratna of Jainism Samyak Drishti, Samyak Jnana and Samyak Chinta are the incarnations of the three deities of Puri Temple. Jains also believe that Balabhadra is Parshwanath, Subhadra is Jain Saraswati and Jagannath is Rishabhath. Asadha Shukla Dwitiya is the 'Garbha Kalyan Divas' of first Tirthankar Rishabhath. The tradition of procession of Jeen idol on a chariot on this day finds similarity with Rath Yatra at Puri. The Kalpabriksha inside the temple is worshipped by Jains as Kalpabata of Rishabhath.

The Baisi pabachha, (twenty two steps) to the temple represent the twenty two tirthankar of Jain Dharma. They also believe that the Kaibalya prasad of the Lord is the way to Kebali or salvation stage that they ultimately aspire for.

Many historians come out with lot of facts that Odisha was at one time a prime Tantra Pitha in which significant traces of tribal, Bouddha and Hindu tantra could be found. As per tantra Shastra, Neeltantra the Trinity on Ratnabedi are seated on Tantra Yantra. Balabhadra, Subhadra and Jagannath are on Tara Yantra, Bhubaneswari Yantra and Shyama Yantra respectively. It is also recognized as a shakti pitha (pada pitha) where the feet of sati fell down according to Daksha Yajna story. It was also a centre of Shaktism of India as per references available in literature, tradition and archaeological remains. Matsya Purana refers to Purushottama Kshetra as a shakta pitha with its presiding goddess Vimala. In tantric lore, Lord Jagannath is considered to be Bhairava and Bimala is worshipped as Bhairavi. The Anna Prasad of Lord Jagannath becomes Mahaprasad after it is offered to Devi



Bimala. In the Devi Bhagavata, Bimala is considered to be the kshetra shakti. Puri has been given a place of prominence as a major Shakti Kshetra because of the congregation of seven Goddesses of supreme power (Sapta Shakti) namely, Subhadra, Mahalaxmi, Vimala, Savitri, Sridevi, Bhudevi and Bhubaneswari. For the protection of this supreme Tantra Pitha it is guarded by Ashta Chandi – Ardhashani Mausima, Shyamakali, Charchika, Chamundeswari, Banadurga, Baseli, Ramachandi and Kakudikhai- outside the temple (Pitha) and the inside is protected by Ashta Chandi – Sheetala, Bedhakali, Kuttamachandi, Saraswati, Bhadrakali, Sarbamangala, Uttarayani and Shmasankali. Uddishtantra has described Subhadra as Yogamaya or the original form of Prakriti. It seems that the central placement of Subhadra in the Jagannath triad is an indication of the pivotal position of the Shakti in the great shakta pitha Purusottama. Virtually, Jagannath and Balabhadra are the paramatma (Param Brahma) and the jibatma (Jiva Brahma) conjoined with parashakti or Lipta (Gyana) Shakti of the Brahma known as Devi - Subhadra.

It is believed that Adi Shankaracharya saw Lord Shiva in the idol of Lord Jagannath on Ratnabedi. Natha sampradaya which practises Saiva tantra started worshipping Lord Jagannath as per their custom considering him as the incarnation of Lord Shiva. The presence of Ishaneswara, Pataleshwar, Agneswara inside the temple and Lokanath, Markandeshwara, Jameshwara, Kapalamochana and Neelakantha around the city has kept the Saiva tradition alive. The observations of Mahashivratri, Vishwanath temple on the fourth step of Baisi Pabachha, the participation of Pancha-lingeshwara along with Madanmohan in the twenty one-day long Chandan Yatra are evidences of huge influence of the Saivism on rituals of Puri temple.

In our Sanatan tradition the place of Sun God is quite significant as he is regarded as the brighter manifestation of Nirakara (formless) Parambrahma in our spiritual scriptures. Jagannath temple's customs and rituals were influenced by the Saura Sect during 1st century AD to 12th century AD. Regular worship of Sun has continued by establishing two temples inside the premises. The Aruna Stambha was shifted from Konark temple to the Singhdwar by the Marathas who believed in Sun worship. The daily rituals of the Trinity starts with yajnan in the kitchen and Surya Puja. The Sauras believe the left and right eyes of Lord Jagannath represent the moon and sun, the three chariots represent the three qualities of sun and the seven colours of clothing around the chariots symbolise seven main colours of Sunlight. During Rath Yatra, the chariots first travel in the north direction and then return in the south direction as per the Uttarayan and Dakshinayan movement of Sun. Lord Jagannath is regarded as Sun God on the Chariot. The popular belief is, if one gets the darshan of the Lord on the chariot he is free from rebirth and attains salvation. "Rathe tu Bamanam drustwa, punarjanmam na bidyate". Bamana is another name of Sun God. Due to the influence of Saura Sect, special rituals are observed in the temple on Samba Dashami, Magha Saptami, Mahavishub Sankranti, solar and lunar eclipses, etc.

We can also find traces of Ganapatya sect's beliefs and rituals getting mingled with the great Jagannath culture from the instances of Gajanana Besha or Hati Besha of the Trinity on the Snana Mandap on Snana Purnima Day every year, the first Puja of Ganesha in the Panchadevata Puja at the starting of daily rituals and the presence of Bata Ganesha, Char Ganesha, Nrutya Ganesha and Kanchi Ganesha in the temple.



To the believers of Sri Ramachandra, He has appeared to be their God. Santha Tulsidas, Sadhak Balaram Das have become His ardent followers seeing Sri Ramachandra sitting on Ratnavedi. Tulsidas has immortalized his feeling of ecstasy with these few words “Johi Rama Sohi Jagaddisha, Dina Hine Ananta Parbata Shesha”.

Though various sects and religions have influenced the Sri Jagannath culture in many ways, it is beyond out that He is the supreme incarnation of Lord Bishnu from time immemorial. He is Balakrishna during the Bal Dhoop, (the first offering of the day), Brindavan Bihari during noon Puja, Dwarakadhish in the evening and Rasarasika in the night. Many Beshas of the Lord throughout the year like Suna Besha, Kaliyadalan Besha, Krishna Balram Besha, Radha Damodar Besha, Bankachuda Besha, Shraddha Besha, etc. are manifestations of Shri Krishna. The 21-day long Chandan Yatra showcases the Krishna Leela of Dwapar Yug. The four Rasas observed in the temple, the use of Khandua pata with Geeta Govinda inscribed on it during the Badasinghar Besha every night, the Debadasi Seva are all manifestations of Krishna Leela in Jagannath Temple. It was the Krishna incarnation with which Jagannath is identified to a large extent due to the fact that the cult of Krishna became increasingly popular in the beginning of 11th and 12th century AD in Bengal and Odisha owing to the tremendous influence of ‘Bhagabat Purana’ and the Holy Trinity on Ratnavedi were identified with Krishna, his elder brother Balram and their sister Subhadra (Ekanamsa).

Adi Shankaracharya, the preacher of Advait Vedanta, Ramanuj, the preacher of Vishishtadwaita, Madhavacharya, the preacher of Dwaitbad have all regarded him as Param Purusha

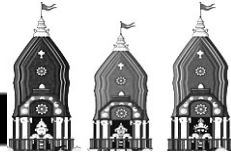
Purna Brahma Narayan; the main source of Bhakti jnana.

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu spent last 18 years of his life in Neelachala spreading the Prema Leela of God after realizing Purnabrahmatwa in Lord Jagannath. In broad sense, it can be said that He has been universally accepted as Purushottam of Bhagavad Geeta. In His incarnation of Vishwaroop, He had shown all grandeur of Lord Bishnu and in His incarnation of Darubrahma, He has manifested all higher thoughts of the great Sanatan culture of India. Jagannath is the Avatari from whom all the ten Avatars have emanated.

Sri Jagannath cult is an epitome of divergent religious creeds and schools of philosophy that prevailed in India at different periods. In the historic process of adjustments and adaptability, Jagannath culture has assimilated strange contradictions in most amazing and awe-inspiring manner. This huge melting pot of values and beliefs, customs and traditions which mesmerizes the seekers of truth by its grandeur has been enriched with the contributions from thoughts and consciousness, teachings and preaching, knowledge and discussions, science and logic, spirituality and morality of all sects and religions, faith and beliefs of the world. The divine melting pot of cultures and religions gives the message of peace and prosperity, friendship and brotherhood, coordination and cooperation, unity and integrity, tolerance and non-violence for the entire mankind. Shri Jagannath is the symbol of Universal humanitarian consciousness.

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Sri Jagannath is the Lord of the universe. Thirteen yatras are celebrated in twelve months in the year: Snahan Yatra and Rath Yatra both are main yatras of the Lord. In both yatras the Daruvigrahas (wooden shapes) are carried by Daitas directly to Snanamandap (Bathing Pandal) and to the car for Darshan of lakhs of devotees. These festivals attract multitude of visitors from various parts of India and abroad transcending all barriers of caste, creed, colour and religion. These represent the universal brotherhood. In this phase, Purusottama Kshetra became the most powerful religious centre in our

much attracted by the uddanda Kirtan and accepted Sri Chaitanya as his religious Guru. He took diksha (Teaching) from him. Lord Jagannath became indentified as Krishna or Madana Mohan from that day. The Nitis and rituals according Vaishnava tradition started in the temple of Lord as Janmastami, Jhulan Yatra, Nuapua, Chandan Yatra, Padma Vesha, Gaja uddharana Vesha etc. In these only on two occasions Snana Purnima and car festival, wooden shapes participate and in other festivals, the representative of Daru Devatas, Madanmohan participates moving on his vimana called as Manivimana.



Madana Mohana : The Representative Deity of Lord Jagannath

Dr. Ramakanta Kar

state and also it became a popular centre of Vaishnavism in India. At Purusottam Kshetra, Puri on the eastern coast of India, the Lord is adorned with all sorts of alluring luxuries - glamorous attire, delicious food and drink, above all, with charismatic fairs and festivals. The famous car festival of Lord Jagannath at Puri takes place in Ashadha Sukla Dwitiya, i.e., the second day of the bright fortnight of Ashadha (June-July) every year. This festival continues for nine days and Snahan Purnima for one day at Snahana Vedi (bathing stage) on the last day of Jyestha. In 16th century A.D., Chaitanya came to Puri and the former king, Shri Prataparudra Dev was very

In Chandan Yatra, Madanamohan, Bhudevi and Sridevi Move to Narendra Pond with Panchu Pandava : Judhistir-Jameswar, Bhima- Lokanath, Arjun- Markandeswar, Nakul- Kapalamochana and Sahadeva- Nilakantha. There pancha pandavas go to their own festivals by their own Vimanas (Chariots). Dolagovind (Sri Krishna) goes to Dolavedi from Srimandir by his own Palinki.

Different sahi yatras prepare 'medha' like Ravana, Parasurama, Rama Vanabasa, Nakakana, Rama Abhisheka etc. with glorious



procession move their own areas dancing attractively. At last all yatras go to Jagannath Ballava for ending the occasion meeting with Sri Ramchandra, representative of lord Jagannath. In Janmastami, the birthday of lord Krishna, Madana Mohan goes by his own viman to different places for panti and next day morning Madan Mohan with Ramakrushna swing on Jhulana. In Jagamohana Rukmini Vibaha, inside of the temple, Lord Krushna and Maa Rukmini (Laxmi) married each other going by their own Vimana.

Lord Jagannath known as Parama Brahma is the only universal truth, other things are illusion. Aadishankaracharya said, 'Brahma Satyam Jagat Mithya, Brahman Jibeiba Na Parah. But it is the only truth that Brahma has no shape, no colour, no gender and He is out of imagination. 'Jagannath Culture' is maintaining its uniqueness i.e. "Unity in Diversity". The speciality of the cult is that all the religions of the world have been merged within it to make it flexible, open and generous. This cult is based upon ideals of democracy, principle of equality, Justice, honesty and integrity. Sri Jagannath Culture is a beautiful combination of worldly and cosmic realities.

"Aakrushena Rajasa Vartamno
Nibesayannamrutam Martyancha Hiranyayena
Sabita Rathean Devojat Bhuvanani Pashyan"

(Rig Veda 1st Mandal, 35 Sukta, 2nd mantra)

That means Returning through darksome region, arousing the immortals and mortals, god

savita comes on the golden car beholding all the creatures.

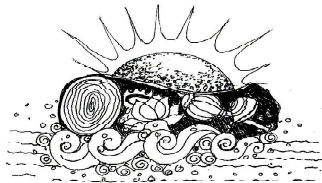
Kabi Salabega has described the real relationship of Radha with lord Krishna in his Bhajan:

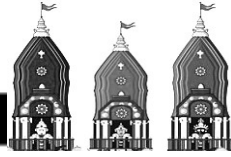
*'Ghata bata na chhadi se patha jagi basila
Tanku dekhi ange mo ananga ahi danshila
Tema markata radha shyama ange misila'*

Salabega, the devotee of lord Jagannath thinks Sri Jagannath as Sri Krishna and Laxmi as Radha. The lila of Srikrishna has been described in the poem of Salabega. The attraction between Sri Krishna and Sri Radha is mutual since both care for each other. Acharya Rajadeva Paramahansa Bajapeyi established Bhudevi and Sridevi on Ratnasimhasana of Sri Mandira in 1324 A.D. and in 1230 A.D. Other Vighrahas were established by the Gajapati Maharaja Anangabhim Deva-III. Eight types of pearls are under the Ratnasimhasana in 8 directions. Darshan of Mahaprabhu on Ratnasimhasana gives the devotees more pleasure and washes away all disability of the body and mind. In the vast canvas of time it has been proved that the lotus feet of Lord Sri Jagannath are the repository of eternal peace. His grace only gives salvation.

Jay Jagannath.

Dr. Ramakanta Kar, Yoga Niketana, Gudia Sahi, Puri-1.





Puri is famous for Lord Jagannath temple and known as Jagannath-Puri all over world. The holy shrine came under Muslim attacks for several times in the past. Despite this it has maintained its sanctity and pristine glory and attracted devotees and tourists from every nook and corner of the world. Thousands of devotees from different parts of the world visit Puri, the abode of Lord Jagannath, every year. Puri is considered one of the four sacred dharmas of the country. Down the ages many poets, philosophers, politicians and philanthropists have been greatly influenced by the Jagannath cult and contributed immensely to



Shree Chaitanya and Baishnavism

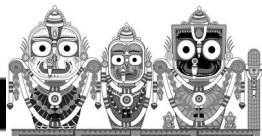
Dr. Subhrajyoti Moharana

the growth and development of Jagannath cult. In the past many saints like Shankar, Ramananda, Ramanuja, Madhabacharya, Kabira, Nanaka and Chaitanya visited Puri and spent a few years there and gained knowledge on the rituals of Lord Jagannath. Those saints also while staying at Puri shaped and promoted their philosophical doctrines after being influenced by Jagannath cult.

The origin of Jagannath shrine and cult are shrouded in mystery. Although the historians established the fact that the present temple of Lord Jagannath was built by Ananta Barman Choda Ganga Deva of Ganga dynasty during 12th

century A.D., still some theories have come to surface regarding existence of Jagannath shrine and cult. The scholars of this school of thought hold that from time immemorial Jagannath is existent. They hold this view on the basis of the evidence as mentioned in some epigraphic records, archaeological remains and old literary scripts.

As per the historical and legendary records, primarily Lord Jagannath was worshipped as Purushottam or Nilamadhab or Madhaba in ancient time. In course of time Nilamadhab came to be known as Lord



Jagannath. The cult of Madhab was existent in Odisha during 12th century A. D. At that time the famous poet Jaydev lived in Odisha on the bank of the Prachi River. He was a worshipper of Lord Madhaba. Madhab is otherwise known as Bishnu, accordingly Jayadev was known as Baishnavite. It is known from his sacred text the 'Gita Govinda' that he was devotee of Lord Krishna and profusely wrote on the dalliance of Radha and Krishna which is known as- Madhura-Rasa-Upashanam. Lord Krishna is considered Lord Jagannath. Therefore Jaydev was staunch devotee of Lord Jagannath.

Tradition has it that poet Jayadev was married to Padmabati at Puri on the advice of Lord Jagannath. Padmabati and Jayadev stayed some days at Puri and Padmabati performed her dance before the Lord Jagannath. Jayadev was so engrossed in chanting the name of Lord Jagannath and Krishna that he forgot everything that possessed to him. The saint poet Jayadev has described Buddha as 9th incarnation of Lord Jagannath. The scholars still doubt that whether Buddha was Lord Jagannath or not. What so ever it may be the Buddha is generally accepted as incarnation of Lord Jagannath, who is an incarnate.

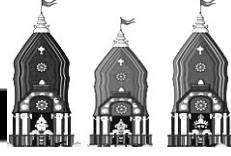
When the Baishnavism was at its peak during the 15th century in Odisha, the great Baishnavite Sri Chaitanya came to Puri and stayed for long seventeen years there to propagate his faith. Since Chaitanya came from Bengal, popularly known as 'Gauda desa', the faith preached by Chaitanya is known as Gaudiya Baishnavism. Therefore Sri Chaitanya was a Gaudiya Baishnava. But by that time in Odisha there lived Panchasakhas (five Associates of Baishnavism). They included Achyutananda Das, Balaram Das, Yashobant Das, Jagannath Das and

Sisu Ananta Das. Since they belonged to Odisha they were known as Odishan Baishnavism or Utkaliya Baishnavism. It is said that the five associates of Utkaliya Baishnavism had met Sri Chaitanya at Puri when the latter was preaching his faith. While the Utkaliya Baishnavism gave emphasis on Yoga, Pranayama and austere methods to be communed with God, the Gaudiya Baishnavism laid emphasis on 'Prema Bhakti' i.e. chanting of name of Lord Krishna to get the divinity.

Despite difference in the practice of getting divinity the two sects of Baishnavism had not shown any animosity between themselves. Rather a cordial relationship was established between them.

It is believed that the Utkaliya Baishnavas were influenced by Sri Chaitanya and the latter was tremendous sway over them. One anecdote has it that one day Jagannath Das was writing cantos of Bhagavat in Odia language under the great sacred banyan tree known as Kalpabata near Bata Ganesh. At that time Shri Chaitanya came smiling to him and asked, "Do you know who am I?" Jagannath Das replied that he was Radha and Sri Chaitanya was Krishna. Chaitanya became very happy with this reply and embraced him. Then Jagannath Das said to Chaitanya, "You have said rightly you are born out of the smiling of Krishna and I am from that of Radha". Therefore Lord Jagannath is considered partly Radha and partly Krishna.

Shri Chaitanya had a good clout over the then political establishment of Gajapati Pratap Rudra Deva. Pratap Rudra was himself a disciple of Shri Chaitanya. During the stay of Shri Chaitanya at Puri people of Odisha were agog with chanting the name of Lord Krishna and a



kind of religious fervour passed through whole of Odisha then. Shri Chaitanya thus contributed a lot to the growth and development of Baishnavism in Odisha under Bhakti Movement. The Five associates of Odishan Baishnavism were very much loyal to Shri Chaitanya and they treated him as Lord Krishna. Although they bowed down to the supremacy of Shri Chaitanya they still continued their own practice of Baishnavism and propagated their faith among their loyalists and disciples. Thus the Baishnavism was at its height during 15th century particularly with the

emergence of Shri Chaitanya and five associates of Odishan Baishnavism. Lord Jagannath is thus the epicenter of all the Baishnavite activities in Odisha. The advent of Sri Chaitanya to Puri and his long stay there certainly expanded the horizon of Baishnavism in many ways.

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Alone the Devotee is Your Life

Bhakta Kabi Salabega

Translated by Dr. Rama Chandra Rout

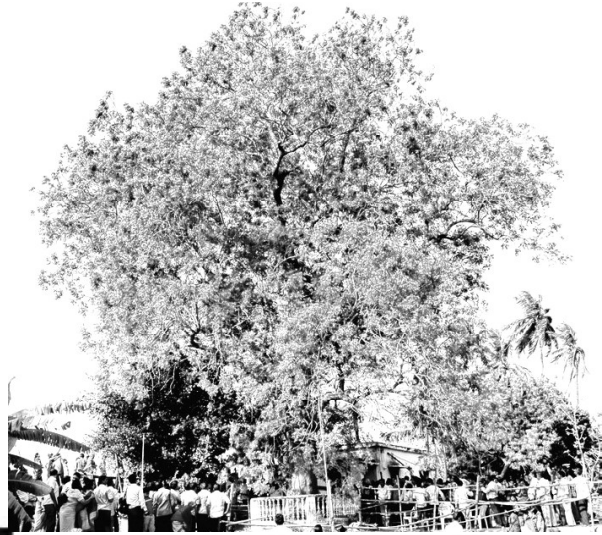
Alone the devotee is your life single,
Your symbols are for them in conch and wheel.
Devotee is your father, mother and friend,
So is your name “ocean of mercy” with no end.
The calf follows the mother cow to have her milk,
In same way You follow your devotees and seek.
My father is son of a Mogul and mother is Brahmin,
Hindu have outcasted me and never drink water
from my hands because of my birth in lower kith and kin.
Even then I am Salbega being Muslim in caste,
Though I am fallen I know nothing except
The beautiful pink lotus feet of my God the best.

(Original Odia poem “Eka to Bhakata jibana” of Salabega translated by Dr. Rama Chandra Rout, Director, Health Intelligence & V S (Odisha), Bhubaneswar, Mob: 94377 42499.





Hinduism has since ages been an environmentally sensitive philosophy. No religion, perhaps, lays as much emphasis on environmental ethics as Hinduism. The Mahabharata, Ramayana, Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, Puranas and Smriti contain the earliest messages for preservation of environment and ecological balance. Nature or Earth, has never been considered a hostile element to be conquered or dominated. In fact, man is forbidden from exploiting nature. He is taught to live in harmony with nature and recognize that divinity prevails in all elements, including plants and



The Tree Worship and Jagannath Cult

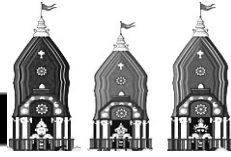
Prof.(Dr.) Sarbeswar Kar

animals. The sages (rishis) have always had a great respect for nature. They perceived that all material manifestations are a shadow of the spiritual. The Bhagavad Gita advises us not to try to change the environment or wrestle with it. If it seems hostile at times, tolerate it. Ecology is an inherent part of a spiritual world view in Hinduism.

The current deplorable environmental crisis demands a spiritual response. A fundamental reorientation of human consciousness, accompanied by action that is born out of inner commitment, is the need of the hour. In ancient Indian tradition, the king, administrator of dharma,

was to be guided by the underlying principles of political, social and economic relations in a State. Knowledge about ecological balance was given to the king in the coronation oath. Aitareya Brahmana States the king has to take the oath that - 'Between the night I am born and the night I die, whatever good might have done, my heaven, my life, my progeny, may be deprived of it, if I oppress you.' Satapatha Brahmana States that the king should take consent of the earth at the time of Rajasuya Ceremony thus - "Mother Prithvi (Earth), injure me not, nor I thee."

The Hindu idea is that this whole world is a forest. To keep this world as it is we have to



keep the world-forest intact. Hinduism describes everything in terms of divinity and in relation to the Ultimate Reality. The different aspects of this Ultimate Reality are all to be found in the various forms of the physical world.

The mention of Kalpabriksha and Chaityabriksha in the ancient scriptures indicate that the worship of the trees is indeed an ancient Indian practice. From time immemorial, certain trees and plants in India have been invested with divine attributes. Hindus were taught to worship and rever trees and plants in the belief that it would influence their own personal well-being. Evergreen trees were regarded as symbols of eternal life and to cut them down was to invite the wrath of gods. Groves in forests were looked upon as habitations of the gods. The banyan tree occupies the pride of place amongst the sacred trees of India. It has aerial roots that grow down into the soil forming additional trunks. It is, therefore, called bahupada, the one with several feet. Another great tree of India is the peepal. Known for its antiquity, it finds mention in any Hindu scriptures. Every village has as special peepal tree and the village elders hold their councils beneath its hallowed foliage. The most famous of these is the one at Gaya under which Buddha sat after enlightenment. The Bilva and Ashoka tree are associated with different deities. The Ashoka tree is sacred to Kama, the god of love and according to folklore, its buds will open up in full bloom when the foot of a young beautiful maiden touches its roots. The Bilva with its three leaves resemble the trident of Shiva, finds mention in Hindu mythology.

Called Holy Tree, Neem is the most celebrated medicinal plant in India and found mention in ancient texts like Atharva Veda, Upanishad, Amarkosha and Ghatsutra. Trees are

closely related with joys and sorrows of Indian people. The Ficus Tree has been found in the cultural-stratum of Mohenjodaro. The Vedic age people retained it as an object of veneration. The Buddhists also adopted the tenet of the Ficus tree, since Lord Buddha is said to have achieved enlightenment under its shade. The Sal (Shorea Robusta) is an object of worship among the Santal, Kond and Gonds in Odisha.

The tale of Purushottama Mahatmya in Skanda Purana tells of four images of Darubrahma Jagannath that came to light from the Apaurusheya tree which floated in the sea. There is also mention of Nyagrodha tree worship. Therefore it is assumed that Jagannath cult might have found its origin in tree worship.

Buddhism adopted the cult of tree worship then prevalent in the country. The trees which are associated with the birth of Buddha are Sal, Ashoka and Ficus tree. On account of such associations with Buddha, these trees are regarded as most sacred by the Buddhists. This notion of the Buddhists sanctifying trees might have impinged on the later Hindu society. Therefore, Mr. J. Fergusson rightly observes, "With all their property and all their usefulness we can hardly feel astonished that the primitive races of mankind should have considered trees as the choicest gift of the Gods to men and should have believed that their spirits still delighted to dwell among their branches, or spoke oracles through rustling of their leaves. In Jain literature, the mention of a sacred tree and the painting of a green leaved tree in the caves of Khandagiri and Udaygiri are ample evidences of tree worship in Jainism which is known as Briksha Chaitya.

In Nilatantra it is mentioned that Pipal and Bara trees are not worth cutting down for the



making of idol. Only during eclipse times the Baruna or Palasa tree can be collected for the purpose. However, a neem tree situated near any holy place or temple or side of a Baruna tree is commendable for preparing idol. The importance of neem tree has been emphasized in South India as well.

Generally a bow made of a neem branch is placed on the holy jug of water meant for different ceremonial functions and holy celebrations in South India. According to Ayurveda, neem has multi-dimensional benefits. Ranging from the root of this tree to its fruits, every part is extremely useful for the human beings. Different trees are classified according to different genders. From among them, neem is categorized in the male group and considered as a strong wood.

Neem has powerful pest controlling activities and medicinal properties. More importantly, pesticides made from neem are much safer compared to synthetic pesticides. The side-effects of synthetic pesticides are often not less serious than the problems themselves. They cause environmental contamination and are a great risk for human health. Neem is extremely beneficial to save the environment from pollution; since its inflorescence is purifying with its feathery crests tossing fifty feet into the sky, Neem is a veritable 'Kalpataru' for giving healthy environs. Like other trees, it exhales out oxygen and keeps the oxygen level in the atmosphere balanced. Like other trees, it also brings other environmental benefits such as flood control, reduction of soil erosion and less salination. Neem can avert environmental crisis in India and other tropical countries as it can be successfully used for rehabilitation of degraded

ecosystems and wastelands. Neem is highly recommended for reforestation of semi-arid regions in India and tropics of the Sub-Saharan region, Asia and Central America. Neem is extremely useful in urban forestry because it has remarkable ability to withstand air and water pollution as well as heat. Neem also helps in restoring and maintaining soil fertility which makes it highly suitable in agro-forestry.

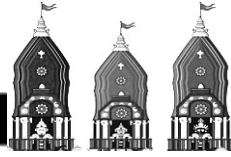
Neem is a natural resource to keep environment clean. In villages and cities as well as on farms, it is useful as a wind break. As a source of shade, it is excellent for parks, roadsides etc.

Because of these treasure troves of nature, neem in Indian culture has been ranked higher than 'Kalpavriksha', the mythological wish-fulfilling tree. In 'Sharhe-Mufradat Al-Qanoon', neem has been named as 'Shajra-e-Mubarak', the 'blessed tree', because of its highly beneficial properties.

Therefore, the Neem tree is considered sacred from all counts and the tree is itself resistant to pest and insect attacks. The idols of Puri Trinity are made of Neem tree. The Nabakalebar rituals of Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra can't be complete without the mention of Neem tree. Therefore Lord Jagannath is described as Daru Debata (the Wood-idol deity). In the Hindu scriptures and philosophy Neem tree is considered most sacred and worshipped. Neem tree is thus an integral part of Jagannath cult.

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Puri, the Jagannath Dham, is considered an important destination for both devotees and tourists, who come over to Puri in a large number to visit the Triad. Devotees throng Puri everyday, but on the occasion of Rath Yatra the Jagannath Dham witnesses sea of humanity. The sacred place of Puri or Purusottam in the East assumed increasing prominence through ages as one of the four famous Dhams, others being Badrinath in the North, Dwaraka in the West and Rameswaram in the South. It was recognised by Adi Shankaracharya as one of the eminent places of pilgrimage in the eighth century A.D. Puri assumed



Impact of Jagannath Cult Over Socio-Cultural Milieu of Odisha

Dr. Dinabandhu Moharana

more and more importance as great Vaishnava Acharyas like Sri Ramanuja, Sri Vishnuswami, Sri Nimbark and Sri Madhavacharya visited this place. Subsequently, it was visited by great saints of various religious communities namely Nanak, Kabir, Sri Chaitanya and so on. It was compared with Kashi, Mathura, Vrindavan, Ujjain, Prayag, Gaya, Ayodhya and other sites of pilgrimage.

Lord Jagannath is the presiding deity of Puri and a prominent symbol of Hindu Kingdom. The Gajapati King of Puri was recognized as the supreme royal authority, for safeguarding the hoary traditions and long-ranging rituals, year-

round festivals with all Pujas, Veshas, Prasads and Mahaprasads. But the king did not claim any supremacy rather he was humble, loyal, devoted and committed to the famous traditions and heritage honoured by all sections of Hindu community. The king however, felt himself as the first servant of Lord Jagannath although he is ever regarded as the moving god (Chalanti Vishnu), the temporal incarnation of god. The glory of Lord Jagannath and supremacy of the king are acknowledged by all as part and parcel of every day life from birth of a child to the first day of the new year as per the royal Anka calculation.



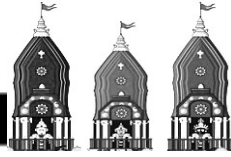
Although over the years hundreds of kings came into existence in Odisha and India, the Gajapati King was given utmost recognition as the source of strength and inspiration, great cultural and religious sanctity. The day-to-day life of the people, customs and traditions, the ceremonies and festivals are influenced by him. The birth, marriage, engagements, Upanayan, even death of individuals are marked by influences of the celestial blessings, instructions, guidance and approval. Puri is connected with all important places and regions throughout the country with roads, railways and flights. Due to increasing number of pilgrims the British government also constructed the network of communication from the ancient times. Pilgrims and devotees pay visits to Lord Jagannath from every nook and corner of India. Due to strong attraction of God they grow in number day by day. Particularly they gather in thousands during festivals and ceremonies like Rath Yatra (Car Festival), Durga Puja, Jhulan, Govind Dwadashi, Snana Purnima and so on. Mahaprasad is regarded as the sacred food cherished by everybody.

For preparation of Mahaprasad Sebayats, a large number of people and transport facilities are engaged throughout the year. Thousands of people, artists, artisans, producers and priests are employed through generations. Specific potteries and paintings are required at a large scale. Pandas and Purohits, Pandits, dancers and musicians are engaged in various rituals and festivities. Various specific services are rendered by people through hereditary arrangements. Previously hundred of acres of land were given to these people through endowments. The systems of Pattachitra paintings, the Chamar Seva and of the Devadasis are very specific to the Puri temple. The 'Chamar Seva' is a special service rendered



to gods and it is a right enjoyed by some people. Similarly Chitrakaras are required for preparing Pattachitra and painting the idols of gods etc in the temple and cars during festivals. These people mostly live in some lanes in and around the Puri town and the village like Raghurajpur. Similarly various kinds of potteries are prepared by some people who enjoy this right through endowments of land from ancient times.

The Odishan art, literature and music are influenced immensely by Sri Jagannath Culture. The traditional Mahari dance, Odissi dance, classical songs, are mostly developed under the influence of Lord Jagannath and His favourite lyrics of Geet Govind composed by the immortal poet Jayadev. Many poems and fictions are also written under the influence of Sri Jagannath culture. A lot of folk tales, folk songs, proverbs Chautisas etc. are also influenced by Sri Jagannath culture. Mahaprasad has acquired a special and significant position in the life and religion of Odisha. The cookery of Srimandir is known as the largest cooking system. The sanctity of this holy food is boundless and it is known as a sacred bond between gods and men and among the people. It is interesting to note that Mahaprasad is not only delicious, but also enjoyed by all irrespective of caste, creed and religion. This is also given priority before serving any other food in a feast. It strengthens the bondage between castes and relations. Especially newly formed bondages of marriage are solemnized by

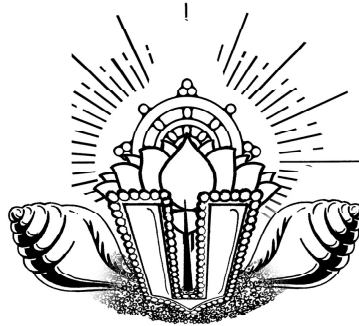


Mahaprasad. The Mahaprasad is prepared daily many times inside the temple very scientifically. Even during the Car Festival, Mahaprasad is cooked in Gundicha Mandir and taken by thousands of people.

It is thus found that Sri Jagannath Culture has a great impact on the socio-religious and

economic life of Odia people in particular and Hindu community in general. A deep sanctity and significance is attached to the culture of Lord Jagannath not only by Hindus, but also by many people belonging to other religions. Particularly, Srimandir, Sri Jagannath and His allied objects are given great honour and reverence by the people of Odisha. Lord Jagannath is not only the presiding deity, but also His temple is regarded as the nerve centre controlling all aspects and spheres of Odia people. Thus Puri is the epicenter of cultural, social, religious and economic activities which have largely impacted the life-style of Odias for years together.

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Lord Jagannath alongwith his brother Lord Balabhadra and sister Devi Subhadra had to leave the Puri temple for other places in Odisha during the attacks on the temple carried by Muslims or Hindu renegades. Of all attacks the worst heinous took place during mediaval Odisha particularly from 1568AD to 1610 AD. During that period of 42 years the Puri deities had to face five invasions.

The Army Assistant of Sulaiman Karani, the Nawab of Bengal was Kalapahad, who unleashed a reign of terror in Odisha in 1568AD. He went on a rampage and invaded Puri temple.



Invasions on Puri temple in Medieval Odisha

Prof. (Dr.) Rasmirekha Mishra
Prof. (Dr.) Taranikanta Mohanta

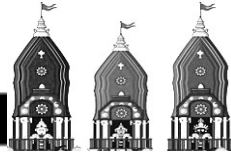
In the invasion history of the Jagannath Temple, Kalapahad is infamously recognised among Odias for his cruelty and dastardly acts against the lords. Not only did he attack the temple, he burnt the deities.

Among 18 invasions occurred in the temple, the fifth one was by Kalapahad in 1568 AD. As information of Kalapahad's coming to Puri reached temple, the then servitors secretly carried the idols to the Chilika lake and hid in the Parikud Island. After invading the temple and looting the wealth, Kalapahad could know of exile of the deities.

He then drove his army to Chilika and took away the deities to the Ganga river with help of an elephant. He fired them on the river bank.

Though the idols turned to ashes, but the souls (Brahma) within the wooden bodies remained unchanged.

One Bisher Mohanty, a Vaishnavite saint went to the Ganga and managed to collect the Brahmas in the ashes and bring back to the Kujanga Gada in Khurda and hid in the Mridanga, a type of drum. later, the 'Brahmas' were placed in the newly built wooden deities.



During reign of Ramachandra Dev, the deities were then taken back to the Jagannath Temple. As per 'Madalapanji', Kalapahad was a Bengali Brahmin whose real name was Kalachand Roy Bhadury. As Kalachand married Dulari, the daughter of a Bengal Sultan, the then Brahmin society never accepted him.

But Kalachand wanted to retain Hinduism. Thus he came to the Jagannath Temple for expiation. But the then priests rebuffed him.

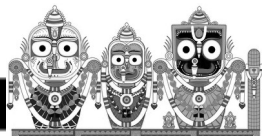
It made Kalachand fiery and revengeful. From that time, he took a vow to exterminate Hindu religion, its idols and shrines.

During the reign of Mukundadev of Chalukya dynasty, Kalapahad joined as assistant commander of Bengal ruler Sulaiman Karrani.

The reason of Karrani's attack on Jagannath temple was Mukundadev's enmity. As Mukundadev gave shelter to Ibrahim Sur and kept good relation with Mughal emperor Akbar, it fumed Sulaiman Karrani. The Bengal ruler was treating both Ibrahim and Akbar as his enemies. Ultimately, to teach a lesson to Mukundadev, Sulaiman sent his army to conquer Odisha led by Kalapahad. Mukundadev could not resist the expedition and ultimately surrendered before the Muslim army and was killed mercilessly.

Historians are of different views on the whole gamut of affairs relating to the fifth invasion which was launched by a Muslim invader Kalapahad in the year 1568 AD during the reign of Mukundadeva Harichandan, the Chalukya King of Odisha. Kalapahad was one of the army assistants of Sulaiman Karrani, the Afghan Sultan of Bengal. In this expedition Bayazid the son of Karrani was the commander of the Bengal army.

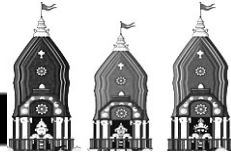
He was assisted by Sikandar Uzbek and Kalapahad. The reasons of Karrani's attack on the temple of Lord Jagannath was Mukundadeva's entanglement in the political diplomacy which created much bad blood between the two. Firstly, Mukundadeva gave political shelter to Ibrahim Sur who was a great enemy of Sulaiman Karrani. Secondly Mukundadeva committed another offence by exchanging envoys with the great Mughal emperor Akbar. In 1566 A.D Akbar sent envoys to the court of Mukundadeva and Mukundadeva in exchange sent a Hindu ambassador named Paramananda Ray to the Court of the Mughal emperor. Akbar was a great enemy of Sulaiman Karrani. These two offences committed by Mukundadeva incurred great displeasure in the mind of Sulaiman Karrani which paved the way for his Odishan invasion. Kalapahad the Assistant Army General of Sulaiman Karrani led the expedition against Mukundadeva of Odisha in 1568 A.D. On the contrary Mukundadeva sent Raghubhanja Chhotaraya to resist the army of Kalapahad but failed. Raghubhanja proved traitor and Kalapahad occupied Cuttack. So Mukundadeva surrendered before the Muslim army of Bengal. In the meantime Ramachandra Bhanja the commandant of Sarangagarh fort (Baranga) rebelled against Mukundadeva. The latter was killed at Gohiratikiri (Near Jajpur) because of the two traitors Sikhi and Manai who were the generals of the King of Odisha. Ramachandra Bhanja was also killed by the invader. Ramachandra Bhanja who declared himself the king of Odisha finally proved himself as traitor behind the assassination of Mukundadeva, the last Hindu king of Odisha. In the Madalapanji this traitor has sometimes been described as Ramachandra Bhanja and sometimes as Ramachandradeva. The latter name seems to be more correct. After occupation of



the forts of Cuttack and Sarangagarh Kalapahad successfully led his army to Puri to demolish the temple of Jagannath. The servitors of the temple got information of the fall of Katak (Cuttack) to the hands of the Muslims. They hid the triad in an island inside the 'Chilika lake' as stated in the 'Madalapanji'. The deities were hidden underground at Hastipatna in Parikuda identified with Chhapali, Khepali and Hatipada. Kalapahad could easily know about the secrecy of the hidden deities. He carried the triad from 'Chilika Lake' to the bank of the river Ganges on an elephant where he burnt them. Bisher Mohanty, a Vaishnavite saint followed Kalapahad and managed to bring back the 'Brahmas' to Kujanga Gada keeping inside a Mridanga. Later on the 'Brahmas' were brought to the Gopal temple of Khurda Gada in 1575 A.D. by King Ramachandradeva. Subsequently the 'Brahmas' were placed in the deities. The deities were brought back to the temple of Jagannath from Khurda Gada. It is stated in the same chronicle that Kalapahad destroyed the great temple of Jagannath upto the Amalakasila and defaced the images. It is difficult to ascertain the truth of the statement. But to us it seems that the temple was not pulled down or rased to the ground, though the images were damaged and disfigured as far as possible. There is no archaeological evidence to show that the temple was rebuilt at any time. The original temple as built by Chodaganga has come down to us, though the carvings on the outer faces of the temple have been damaged or disfigured. A tradition in Bengal avers that Kalapahad was earlier a Brahmin by caste. His name was Raju alias Kalachand. He fell in love with Dulari, the daughter of the Sultan of Bengal and married her. But he wanted to retain his religion. The Hindu society refused to accept him. He came to the temple of Jagannath at Puri for

expiation. But the priests rebuffed him. This made him reactionary and revengeful. He took a vow to exterminate Hindu religion, images and temples. This theory is only traditional and does not have any historical authenticity. Kalapahad was an Afghan. Kalapahad was a title used by many Afghans. A nephew of Bahlul Lodi bore this name. Prof. P. Mukherjee observes that "the Muslim chronicles conclusively prove that Kalapahad was a full blooded Afghan and not a Brahmin renegade." Sulaiman Karrani died in 1572 A.D. followed by several invasions and plunders on the temple of Lord Jagannath at Puri by his successive rulers namely Bayazid, Daud, Kuya Khan and Kutlu Khan Lohani who ruled over Odisha one after another. After them the sixth invasion jointly waged on the temple of Jagannath in 1592 A.D. by Suleman, the son of Kutlu Khan and Osman, the son of Isha (ruler of Odisha). They havocked people at Puri and killed them mercilessly. They desecrated the images of the great temple and plundered its wealth. By such action the invaders violated the treaty earlier signed between Isha and Raja Mansingh in 1590 A.D. Mansingh the Mughal general finally suppressed the militant activities of these two Muslim invaders in 1592 A.D. During this time Ramachandradeva, the Bhoi dynasty ruler of Khurda took the leadership of feudatory rulers of Odisha who joined their hands against the Mughal rule.

During the reign of Purushottamadeva of Bhoi Dynasty Mirza Khurum, the commander of Islam Khan the Nawab of Bengal invaded Puri in 1601 A.D which is considered as the 7th attack on the temple of Lord Jagannath. The servitors of the temple could smell of it and shifted the triad to village Kapileswarpur near Puri in vessels through the river Bhargavee. The deities were



kept in the Panchamukhi Gosani temple at Kapileswarpur. Dola festival was celebrated in that temple. Thereafter the deities were shifted to Dobandha Pentha where the Lords passed eight months with 'Shital Bhoga' offerings. As per the description of the 'Madalapanji' Mirza Khurum invaded Puri temple during the time of Dola Yatra. He found no deities in the temple and so looted the underground treasury. Hasim Khan, the Subedar of Odisha waged the eighth invasion on the great temple of Lord Jagannath at Puri. This time Purushottam Deva was also the King of Khurda. He shifted the deities to the Gopal temple at Khurda before Hasim's arrival at Puri. In order to satiate his master Jahangir the then Mughal emperor, Hasim Khan plundered the temple of Jagannath at Puri. The deities returned to the temple of Jagannath at Puri by the King in 1608 A.D. The ninth invasion on the temple of Jagannath was launched by a Hindu Rajput Jagirdar Kesodasmaru in 1610 A.D. Kesodasmaru was serving under Hasim Khan. He was a friend of Jahangir. He came to Puri in disguise of a pilgrim accompanied by his faithful soldiers without military uniform during celebration of the car festival. They entered into the Jagannath temple and occupied it. They converted the temple into a fort. At that time the triad were in the Gundicha temple. Kesodasmaru plundered crores of treasury of the temple of Jagannath. Unfortunately the king of Khurda Purusottamdeva was absent at Puri as Chherapahanra (Sweeping the chariots) performed by Mudirath on behalf of the king. The king immediately rushed Puri with his Paik soldiers, chariots, cavalry forces, elephant forces,

arms and ammunitions to Punish Kesodasmaru. The Paik soldiers jumped into the premises of the temple with the help of chariots through four gates. They fought against the Rajput soldiers who were looting the wealth of the temple. Kesodasmaru ordered his soldiers to counter attack Paik army. The Rajput soldiers decided to bind up clothes tightly with bamboos, used oils in ignited clothes which turned into fireballs and threw them against the chariots to burn. The chariots very quickly caught fire and burnt into ashes. So many Paiks died. The King was unable to face the invader. The invader looted the wealth of the temple and went away. During the course of attack the deities remained in the Gundicha temple for eight months. They were brought back to the temple of Jagannath by the help of Vimana. Kesodasmaru being a Hindu became an invader on the temple of Lord Jagannath at Puri.

Puri, being heart of Odishan culture and most sacred place for Hindus, fell prey to Muslim or alien onslaughts several times. The deities in the Puri temple had to face exile. The servitors or devotees tried their best to protect the deities from the Muslim invasion by hiding the wooden idols in other places. The Gajapati Kings too showed their exemplary courage to save the deities, but in vain. Despite all hurdles, the Jagannath cult exists and shines holding tightly the sentiments of Odias and Odisha as well.

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Different festivals are observed among different tribes and communities in India. The Ratha Yatra or Car festival is a Ganaparva. It is a national festival of Odisha which bears much significance in religiosity, spiritualism, common life of every Odia at home or abroad. The three deities of Puri temple, namely Shree Jagannath, Shree Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra are placed on three chariots made of wood. Lord Jagannath is the Lord of the world and the Lord whom every Odia since his birth knows him, not as a God but as a member of his family, as his



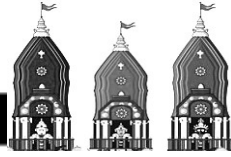
The Humanitarian Prospects of Ratha Yatra

Prof. (Dr.) Nibedita Mohanty

friend, philosopher and guide, his saviour and spiritual leader. Lord Jagannath has been a part and parcel of our flesh and blood. We dedicate our joys and sorrows, adversity and prosperity, marriage/death, action and reaction to him.

The Odia people have attributed humanly characteristic to Lord Jagannath. What an Odia does in day to day life, in fairs and functions, Lord Jagannath in Gundicha Temple is expected to do these things. People scold him, offer him coconut and everything he accepts wholeheartedly. He has no discrimination, poor-rich class division and higher class and lower class mentality. He is the

Lord of the universe. He loves to be present among masses. In the time of car festival the enchanted devotees pull the huge majestic string of the chariots amidst "Haribol" and "hulahuli", the ceaseless playing of cymbals, gini, pakhouja, Odissi dance etc. The Srikshetra Puri witnesses an Ocean of people mad in the love with Lord Jagannath, forgetful of their entity. Many legends established regarding this. Long ago casteism and untouchability were grave blots in Hindu society. The lower caste Hindus were disallowed to enter Shreemandir and to witness Lord Jagannath directly. Therefore Lord Jagannath assured his devotees not to be worried to witness him. So



every year during Ratha Yatra Lord Jagannath himself would come to their presence once in a year, when his devotees would see him.

God within the people an universal religious matter. It is the beginning in Shree Jagannath religion and culture. Lord Jagannath is within the people and people are also within him. There is not any beautiful comparison to this kind of humanitarian view in car festival. The devotees go near his beloved God through their aspirations in them. But Lord Jagannath is a different to this. In order to reach among his devotees he comes out from his abode Ratna singhasana twice in a year. The another car festival which is celebrated for the Hindu God prabhu “Shree Lingaraj” and “Goddess Biraja” where there is a system of taking a replica of original Gods. But for Lord Jagannath he himself comes out among the masses and dignifies his status among all the devotees. There are no barriers for him. He considers everyone equal. He is very much adorable for the devotees. In fact it is very special for Lord Jagannath culture. During the Ratha Yatra more than twelve lakh people around the world come down to the holy city of Puri to witness the extraordinary view of the place. People from abroad that is the USA, United Kingdom, New Zealand, German, France, Italy, South Africa, Australia etc arrived to enjoy and participate in the Ratha Yatra of Puri. Overall the scenic beauty of Puri turned into a place where everyone seems so lively.

The performance of Ratha Yatra is quite a pompous work. The three Lords sit in three chariots. Lord Jagannath in Nandighosh, Lord Balabhadra in Taladhwaja and Maa Subhadra in Debadalana. The wood used for the three huge chariots come from the jungles, months before Akshaya Tritiya, the day when the construction

of chariots begin. Hundreds of carpenters, artists, painters, tailors, blacksmith are engaged in making the chariots, painting the idols, making cloth to cover the chariots till the second day of lunar fortnight in the month of Asadha. Then the world famous car festival is observed throughout the world with great pump and show. On the auspicious day the Brahmins perform dhupa naibedya, mailam and other necessary rituals, convictions. Then the Lords are taken out of the temple in a huge procession which is called “Pahandi”. The devotees pull away the Lords ‘Tahia’ which is a great credit for them and great satisfaction to the lord himself. After the Lords sit in their respective chariots, Gajapati of Puri, taking a golden broom, starts sweeping the three chariots. Wooden horses are tied too. The rituals have a powerful meaning under the seigniorship of Lord Jagannath and his siblings that there is no discrimination between mighty autonomous body and innocent devotees. Everybody in this earth is equal before God. Gajapati himself feels grateful in offering his service as a chandal (jhadudar). It is a legend that Gajapati gets defeated for the first time keeping in mind to marry the Kanchi Princess Padmavati and for the victory over kingdom of Kanchi. But lord Jagannath could not tolerate such offence for his beloved Gajapati and he himself helps to get victory over Kanchi.

There are many festivals in a year which are associated with Lord Jagannath culture. But it is true that, the most precious festival is Ratha Yatra which falls in the month of Asadha (June / July). During the Ratha Yatra, Lord Jagannath with his brother and sister stepped out on their grand Rathas and made their way to the front of the crowd to reach their destination. This is the beginning of the celebration of famous Rath Yatra which prevails for nine long days with proper



rituals. The three lords go to the Gundicha temple and stay there for nine days. Then they return to Shree Mandir on Chariots in the same manner, which is called Bahuda Jatra. Basically the emotional and sentimental attachment with Lord Jagannath is more with the Hindu's of Odisha and some nearby states. Lord Shree Jagannath is closely associated with the Odias and Jagannath culture is Odishan culture. It is a belief that, the Lord fulfils the aspirations and desires of every devotee. He reads every bodies inner mind as "Bhabagrahi" and understands everybody's heart as "Antaryami"

Every Odia feels Shree Jagannath is the head of their family. He offers love, affection, worship, scolding and everything to Lord Jagannath. After observing these nine day Ratha Yatra rituals, it resembles the humanitarian life and living. When a human being becomes ill, he takes medicines and after his recovery, he goes for a tour with a happy mood, he takes healthy food, dresses himself properly with good attire and makes tours. Then after the tour, the Lord Jagannath returns to his karmakshetra 'Ratna

Singhasana'. All the rituals and activities performed during the auspicious Ratha Yatra celebration, may be compared with the life of a common human being.

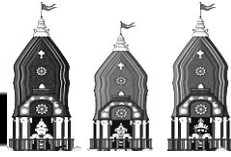
In fact, the humanistic livelihood which is very much reflected in the rituals of Ratha Yatra is really heaven like and pious.

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Lord Jagannath is fond of the famous lyrical work the Geetagovinda, which has a considerable sway over Jagannath cult and Odia culture for years together. This famous work written by the famous poet Jayadev nine hundred years ago has influenced the Odia culture and life style since those days till today and Jayadev has turned into a house-hold name in Odisha.



Krishna and his consort Radha were in the public mind all over India. They influenced the common man's cultural and religious awareness. During the first half of the 16th century the Vaishnavas followed Sri Chaitanya Dev who had identified Krishna with Lord Jagannath thinking themselves as Gopis who were staunch devotees of Krishna. Jayadev sang in his eternal

Jagannath Cult and Geetagovinda

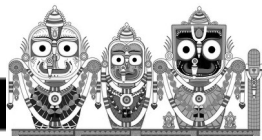
Prof. (Dr.) Padmalochan Sankhua

The Jagannath cult cannot be complete without mention of the famous poet Jayadev of 12th century AD. The famous work composed by Jayadev is Geetagovinda which depicts love between Lord Krishna and his consort Radha.

This famous lyrical work has a tremendous influence over rituals of Lord Jagannath of Puri. Since 12th century AD, the Geetagovinda has been exercising a sway over Odia culture and life in many ways. The later half of the 12th century is known as Jayadev era or Geetagovinda era. During this period, Lord

verses of Geetagovinda the glory of spiritual love. Lord Krishna was portrayed not as an incarnation but an incarnate himself.

The concepts behind such incarnations are based on the idea of protection of the virtuous and annihilation of the wicked. Jayadev has vividly described about the ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu, who is otherwise known as Lord Jagannath. This along with the cult of Jagannath was harmoniously combined with the cult of Krishna, Rama and Buddha. This harmonious assimilation is depicted by Jayadev in his



Geetagovinda which had a considerable influence on the religious life of the people of Odisha in the succeeding centuries.

It is said that a brinjal farmer sang the cantos of Geetagovinda while plucking brinjals in his farm in a melodious voice which enchanted Lord Jagannath so much that he followed the farmer into his farm while listening to his recitation of song from Geetagovinda. The next morning the servitors of Puri temple observed thorns in Lord Jagannath's garments. From that day, a tradition was introduced in the temple to make arrangement of recital of Jayadev's songs. The Lord was expected to be amused with Geetagovinda songs at bed time. It was learnt that Jayadev's wife Padmavati used to sing lyrics of Geetagovinda.

The Geetagovinda has 163 editions during the period from 1732 A D to 1971 AD. It has been rendered into many Indian languages and foreign languages including English, French, Latin, Dutch, German and other European languages. This is how this great epic has gained popularity worldwide.

The world-famous poet of Geetagovinda, Jayadev was an illustrious poet. He was out and out an Odia. But irony has it that only a handful of critics have held that Jayadev was born in Bengal on the bank of the river Ajay in the district of Birbhum. But a lot of litterateurs, critics, scholars, historians and archaeologists have proved that

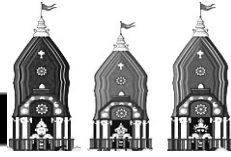
Jayadev was born in Odisha on the bank of the river Prachi in the undivided district of Puri in the village Kenduli or Kenduvilwa.

The Geetagovinda speaks volumes about 10 incarnations of Lord Vishnu or Lord Jagannath. In Geetagovinda Lord Jagannath has been described Lord Krishna, the main character of the epic. All the cantos of this epic are concentrated on Krishna and Radha. The concept of Krishna as Jagannath is commonly found in Odisha since 12th century AD. However, according to famous historian R. D. Banerjee, not a single image of Lord Krishna was found in Bengal and Bihar by 15th century AD. From the historic point of view, it can be considered that Jayadev belonged to Odisha.

The themes of Geetagovinda has spread a religious fervour in Odisha. According to Dr. K.C. Dash, a literary critic of Odisha, Geetagovinda of Jayadev has

been accepted as one of the greatest texts of Bhakti and it is the Vaishnav cult. It has considerable influence over the cultural domain in India and has evoked great admiration in the West. The concept of Radha- Krishna worship has become a cultural heritage of Odisha and accordingly the Geetagovinda and its poet Jayadev are held in high esteem by Odia people. According to Dr. S.C. Pani, a researcher, "Even today the influence of Geetagovinda is quite powerful in the culture of Odisha. Notably Odissi dance, now enjoying great revival, derives many





themes from Jayadev's songs and famous 'Dasabatar' (10 incarnations) song is a part of the repertoire and sculptors even today draw inspiration from Geetagovinda. Jayadev's Geetagovinda is a living monument of Odishan culture. Geetagovinda is a binding force, which has formed the essence of Odia culture.

Since the famous work Geetagovinda was considered sacred, it was allowed to be sung in the Puri temple during the period of the King Narasingha-11 before the advent of Lord Chaitanya Dev to Puri. The Devdasi (maidservant of God) system was introduced. At the time of Badasinghar (bed time) the cantos of Geetagovinda were sung before the Puri Triad in the temple. With the rhythm of the song, the Devdasi, a danseuse, had to perform her bit. But Gajapati Purushottam Dev ordered to discontinue the singing of cantos of Geetagovinda as he thought it was love-song. But the discontinuance of the singing could not last longer as Lord Jagannath, who was very much fond of enjoying the song, advised the main servitor of the temple in the dream to do the needful as before. Gajapati Purushottam Dev, who had ordered for discontinuance of the song, backtracked on his decision and again ordered for singing of the Geetagovinda with an apology before Lord Jagannath.

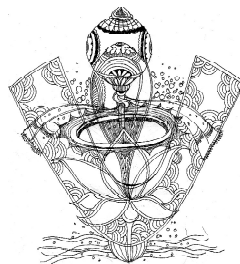
It is said that Purushottam Dev during his rule tried to replace Jayadev's Geetagovinda with

Abhinav Geetagovinda in King's own name, which is said to be originally written by Kabi Chandra Ray Divakar Mishra. But Lord Jagannath did not approve this and He advised the main servitor in his dream to re-introduce singing of the Geetagovinda of Jayadev as usual.

Geetagovinda is a household name and so is its poet Jayadev in Odisha. The famous devotional work can never be wiped out of the memory of the Odias. The Geetagovinda is an untiring burning flame which is so designed to dispel darkness from the religious and cultural horizon of Odisha.

Geetagovinda has become an integral part of Jagannath cult. Down the ages it has enthralled the devotees and the Lord. Its sway over Odishan culture can't simply be downplayed. Poet Jayadev was a staunch devotee of Lord Jagannath. His work Geetagovinda will exist as long as Jagannath cult exists. Jayadev and his master-piece Geetagovinda has successfully withstood the test of time. The famous devotional work would be inspiring the Odias for all times to come.

Prof. (Dr.) Padmalochan Sankhua, Associate Professor,
Govt. Ayurveda College, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.





Lord of the Universe Mahaprabhu Sri Jagannatha is being worshipped at the holy city of Puri in eastern part of Odisha State. With utmost veneration by the entire Hindu community from time immemorial irrespective of caste, creed, section and association.

According to the Rig Veda and Upanishad, six thousand years ago, the Supreme was worshipped here as “Apuruseyu Daru Brahma”. Swetasweta Upanishad described Him as “Apanipada Jabanograhita pasyatyachakhyu sa srutyakarnah”. He is having without hands



Sri Jagannath, the Lord of the Universe

Kanchi Narayan Mahanty

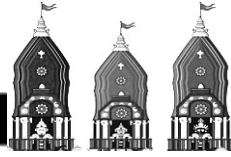


and feet. This reference has been abundantly supported in the History of Ancient Sanskrit literature written by Prof. F. Maxmullar.

Hati Gumpha ie. elephant cave inscription of Khandagiri near the capital of the Odisha State Bhubaneswar mentioned that in the first century AD. the then mighty king of Kalinga defeated Mahapadmananda the King of Magadha of Bihar state and brought back the holy Kalinga Jinasan which was the then form of Sri Jagannatha in a splendid procession.

In the famous book ‘Jnanasidhi’ written by the eminent Bajrajani King named ‘Indrabhuti’ in Seventh century A.D that the omnipotent Lord Sri Jagannatha is worshipped both by the Buddhists and the ‘Jainas’ with complete dedication and devotion. For the Buddhist society He is ‘The Buddha’. the ninth incarnation of Sri Vishnu and for the Jainas He is ‘Rusav Dev’ the chief of Jainism.

The great saint of South India Adiguru Sri Sankaracharya who himself is the incarnation of Lord Siva in the 9th century AD revived,



renewed and reestablished the form of the deities. Besides he had composed the most powerful eight stanza hymn about the divine dual couple of Sri Krishna and Sri Radha by his ecstatic potency in his deferential offering- “Jagannatha Astakam”.

During the period of 9th to 11th century AD Lord Sri Jagannath was worshipped as ‘Siva-Sakti’, His lower portion resembling Siva linga and the upper portion the Goddess Durga.

In 12th Century AD Sri Jayadev the eminent Sanskrit poet and great devotee composed ‘The Gita- Govinda’, famous pastoral drama, unifying Sri Vishnu, Sri Krishna and Sri Ram in Sri Jagannath.

In the 15th century A.D. Adikabi Sarala Das narrated in his ‘Mahabharat’ that the images of Sri Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra were built out of the unburnt and imperishable body turned Daru of Sri Krishna by Sri Vishnu himself in the guise of an old carpenter under order of the mythological King ‘Indradyumna’ and his queen “Gundicha”

The three deities are embodiments of Vishnu, Siva and Brahma. Chakra Sudarsana is the exclusive weapon of Sri Vishnu. Devi Subhadra is also conceived of as Mahasakti Durga as well as Goddess of wealth Mahalaxmi.

Sri Chaitanya Deb came from Nadia Nabadwip by walk to Puri during the period of 15th century. He was of the dual couple of Sri Radha-Krishna observed in Sri Jagannath the divine combination and became his intimate devotee.

Sri Chaitanya’s contemporary eminent poet of Panchasakha ages. Sri Jagannath Das of Puri was conferred as Atibadi experiencing his

extreme Spiritual depth. Subsequently Odia poets like Bhaktakabi Dinakrushna, Upendra Bhanja, Abhimanyu Samantasinghara, Baladeva, Gopalakrushna and many others depicted in their famous devotional poetic works the image of Sri Jagannatha as Sri Vishnu, the supreme Lord as well as dual couple of Sri Radhakrushna.

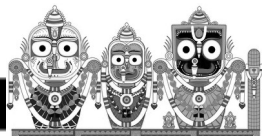
Lord Jagannatha appeared and rendered ‘darsan’ to great devotees like Tulasi Das, Bishnu Swami, Ganapati Bhatta, and many spiritual Gurus of different sects according to their own heart’s desire.

All through the year there is festival and celebrations in the temple and around its periphery. There is a saying in Odia, ‘baramase terajata.’

Lord Jagannath is the “Bada Thakura” the chief among the Gods. His temple is ‘Badadeula’ the great among all the temples and the road in front of the temple is called ‘Badadanda’ the grand road. The sea washing the shores of the pilgrim town is called ‘Mahodadhi’ or the great sea. The cremation ground here is called ‘Swagadwara’ or the gateway to Heaven. Srikshetra the most ancient and purest religious destination is the nerve centre of Odisha. Lord Jagannatha stands as the unique symbol of the Universal and eternal truth the God Almighty is one and one only.

Thousands of pilgrim come everyday to Srikshetra from all parts of India and abroad to have heartfelt darsan of Sri Jagannatha throughout the year.

He is broadly the Lord or master of the Universe. He is having numerous names. He is also called, named as Jagabandhu the friend of



the Universe. This divine and persistent friendship between the creator and the creation is candidly reflected when Sri Jagannatha goes outside in car festival every year.

The Spiritual ethics proves among the Lord of the Universe and the common public or the devotees in the Grand Road while He was nine days outing for Ghoshajatra by three big chariots.

He is in higher consciousness worship as Parambrahma and Purushottama. The first name denotes the Supreme soul who is having no shape Nivakara. The latter name means the best or the noblest person who is having shape image ie. Sakara. This means that he is above all mortals as supreme among immortals. The details about our Lord of the universe vividly narrated in the Geeta hymn (sl.no. 15-16).

He is both shapeless and shapable and may take any shape as per his desire such as a Fish, a Tortoise, a Boar, Narasimha, Vamana, Parshuram, Rama, Krishna etc. In most of the Hindu temple in the holy cities the Dasabatara worship is an old and ancient tradition. All avatars have appeared except one Kalki who will appear at the end of the Kalijuga.

The order of the ancient concept of the above avatars have also been interpreted to be reflective of modern Darwin evolution, as a description of the evolution of consciousness.

The pilgrim and devotee finds with great delight a perpetual and enigmatic smile that remains fixed in his coral boat like lips which indicates that He is omniscient of the past, present and future of all about nobody knows him at all,

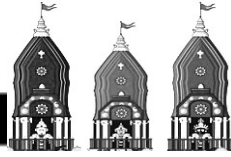
so it is foolish to conceal anything from him and needless to speak anything before him about one's own sorrows and sufferings. He extends impartial and filial love to all without discrimination of the virtuous and the vicious. He perpetually lifted his two bold arms as if to embrace one and all whoever comes with penance to surrender under his holy feet. This is why his name is patitapaban ie. Purification of the sinful, unholy, vanquished, fallen.

Jagannatha consciousness has become a widespread phenomenon on the world at large. From ancient times Odisha has become the cradle of several religious faiths. It has cast its impact on the people of the world a unique culture projection Odia identity.

Ancient texts, palmleaves, Siba purana described Lord Jagannath as a universal deity and Srikshetra Puri as a holiest place on the earth. Skanda purana, Siba purana, Utkal Mahatmya, Bruhat Nrusimha purana, Tantra jamala, Brahma purana, Narada purana, Kurma purana, Sarala Mahabharata highly glorified our Jagannatha culture, Sripurusottama Kshetra in many fold.

Ancient texts corroborate that Lord Jagannath was originally a deity of the aboriginal tribes and was known as 'Nilamadhava'. The Bluestone image of Nilamadhava was worshipped in the hilltop near the bank of the river Mahanadi now in the remote place Kantilo of Nayagarh District.

The rich Jagannatha culture is based upon democracy, honesty, equality, justice and integrity. This culture is in a sacred beliefs on 'Sarvajana Hitaya, Sarvajana Sukhaya'. The speciality of this



culture is that all the religions of the world have been merged within it to make it open, generous and in all respect elevated.

Due to the immense popularity of Jagannatha consciousness and the fame earned by the Lord Jagannatha Temple Puri, the trend at building temples for Prabhu Jagannatha in different parts of Odisha and outside developed and many such temple were erected in different parts of India.

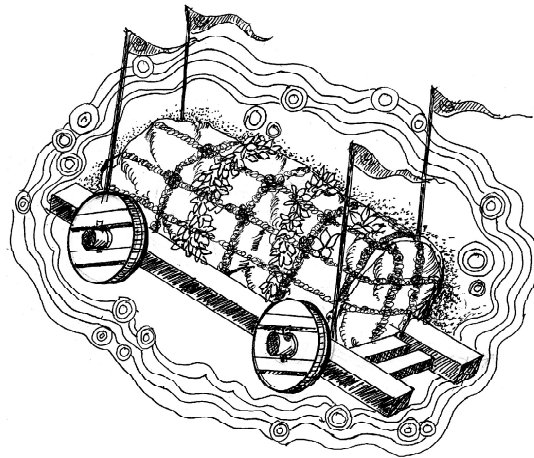
As per the survey it reveals that car festival as well as Sri Jagannatha sanskruti has been popularised in European countries since six decades with maximum devotion, specially among the western countries like England and the celebration of the fair and festivals relating to Lord

Jagannatha culture have been continuing with special care and interest. In the western world Lord Jagannatha culture has been popularised at the behest of International Kishna Consciousness.

Lord Jagannatha is being accepted as the Lord of the universe as it extols the three gems of equality, liberty and fraternity both in body, mind and soul.

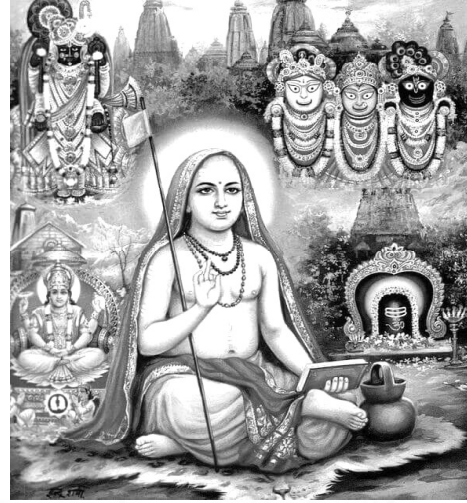
May Lord Jagannath bless the people of the universe on the occasion of ensuing car festival for the year 2023.

Kanchi Narayan Mahanty, Ashram, Shree Vihar, Cuttack-8.





In the history of the world culture and tradition, the number of philosophers and saints born in India (popularly known as Bharatbarsha) were never seen in other parts of the world. In a cyclic manner from the generation of humanity, different saints and philosophers took birth in the lap of mother India. In the Sanatan tradition the most ancient tradition of the world, few saints were considered as the incarnation of the Almighty. Shree Shankaracharya as Adi Guru is considered one of the incarnations of Sri Jagannatha as a great reformer to settle and establish peace and prosperity of the human society.

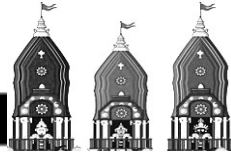


Shree Adishankaracharya in the Culture of Lord Jagannath

Prabhata Kumar Nanda

While analyzing the history of India going back to 2600 years it is observed that the religious, cultural, social and political situation of India was not in proper state. Prior to it India had a glorious tradition enunciated by Upanishads glorifying the essence of humanity and milk of conscience. In due course, a few religious preachers in connivance with ill motivated administrators tried to implement evil practices and the theory of separatism in religion and culture. Taking such advantage, many religious preachers established their own cult and declared themselves as the other form of God. It brought massive decadence to

the glory of Sanatan Dharma i.e. the religion of humanity and eternity. The confrontation of different groups of people created chaotic situation in the society and there were religious wars resulting in blood-shed and killing of innocent lives. Being lured by the materialistic pleasure, kings and administrators found it easier to enforce blind beliefs in the administration under the coverage of religion and God in the society. The rule of so called religious preachers and kings divided India into many small parts and inter- State rivalry was encouraged.



Taking the advantage of the above chaotic situation foreign rulers entered into India through Punjab Sindh area and attacked different States and became winner by fighting with small kings of small States, as there was no unity among the rulers of different States. It has also been observed that inter-State rivalry resulted in boomerang to the ill motivated rulers and in due course the entire India was captured by foreign rulers who had no faith in the eternal humanity.

Adi Guru Shankaracharya saved India from the inter-State rivalry and established sense of equality and universal brotherhood through the re-establishment of Sanatan Dharma. Adi Guru Shankaracharya was from the State of Kerala born in the village of Kalladi in Ernakulum district. He was the worthy child of Shivagu and Arjyamba. He was born in the Brahmin family of Nimbudari pada. As per the records, he was born in 507 B.C (Bikram Sambat) i.e. 2631 of Judhistir shak sambat. It was a Sunday and as per Hindu almanac, Baisakha Sulka Panchami. He had bratopanayan as per Hindu tradition at the age of five. With the consent of her mother, Adishankar left the home at the age of eight for acquiring knowledge and accepted Sanyasa Diksha from Saint Shree Govindapadacharya. Upto the age of sixteen he completed studies in Veda, Vedanta, Religious Puran and history. His deep studies and fluent speaking ability brought him fame and he was honoured by all walks of the people in the society.

Adishankaracharya was an ardent lover of Shiva. It is recorded that Adishankara had the privilege to meet Lord Shiva in the Himalaya (Kailashparbat). Lord Shiva presented five Shivalinga (stone replica of Lord Shiva) embodied with the spiritual light (Nilamani Abha). It is also

told that Lord Shiva presented five Lingas at different sites. Four Lingas were offered at Puri, Dwarka, Shringeri and Badrika. Fifth Linga was presented to the King of Nepal.

Adishankaracharya engaged himself continuously for sixteen years for the regeneration of Hindu culture in India. He wrote more than two hundred books on the essence of Sanatan Dharma, Hindu culture and the glory of India. He defeated all his opponents who were misguiding the society by preaching evil thoughts and negative ideas based on materialistic attitude. He was an expert in debate and was challenging other scholars to confront in the royal gatherings. Adishankaracharya breathed his last at the age of thirty-two in 475 B.C (Bikram Sambat).

Adishankaracharya was a devotee of Lord Jagannath. He was inspired by the universal brother-hood culture of Lord Jagannath. As his mission was to bring unity in diversity in India, he accepted the theory of Sarbadharma Samanwaya i.e. assimilation of all nuclear thoughts of different religions. His principal motto was to establish Sanatan Dharma and to inculcate such thoughts among the people of the society. To eradicate the influence of pseudo religious thoughts from the general administration and to persuade kings to rule with the ethical practices, was the aim of Adishankaracharya. Heritage of India was regenerated as renaissance of the country.

Adishankaracharya established four Dham (the place of supreme religious importance) in India. Considering the geographical state of our country, he established Dham in the East, West, North and South of India. As earlier stated, Puri in the east, Dwarka in the west, Badrika in the north and Rameswara in the south were declared by him as supreme places to offer prayer to the



Almighty. He enunciated that by visiting above four places, a person earns immense virtues (punya).

The first Dhama was commissioned by Adishankaracharya at Puri during Judhistir Saka Sambat 2652 (406 BC-Bikram Sambat). He declared Puri as Rig Veda Pitha and named his centre of activities i.e. Matha as Gobarddhana Matha. The principal deity of the Dhama is Purusottam Sri Jagannath and the presiding Goddess of Dhama is Bimala Devi. He also declared the essence of Puri Dham as "Prajnanam Brahma". He also declared Jagannath Dhama as Shreekshetra i.e. the supreme land in comparison to other three Dhamas commissioned by him at different corners of India.

It is also believed that the body of Satee was divided into eleven parts as was thrown by Lord Shiva to the air after Yaksha Yajna. All the places where the parts of the body of Satee are found, were declared as Sakti Pitha by the scholars. One part of the body of Satee fell at Puri Jagannath Dhama and the Sakti Pitha is named as Bimala Devi. In the Gobarddhana Matha at Puri, Adishankaracharya commissioned an idol of Gobarddhana Natha and Arddhanarishwara.

Kalika Pitha was commissioned at Dwaraka by Adi Shankaracharya during Judhistir Sambat 2646 (480 BC- Bikram Sambat). The Peetha is also named as Sarada Peetha. The presiding deity of Kalika Peetha is Shree Siddheswara and the presiding goddess is Bhadrakali. Kalika Peetha of Dwarka was declared as Sama Deva Peetha and "Tatwa Masi" is the religious slogan of the kshetra.

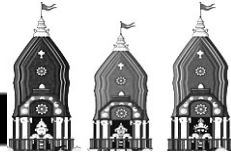
The Jyotri Peetha was commissioned by Sri Adi Shankaracharya in the Badrikashrama in

the Judhistir Saka Sambat 2646 "492 BC" (Biktam Smbat). The presiding deity of Jyotri Peetha is Shree Narayan and the presiding Goddess is Devi Purnasiri. The Dhama is declared as Atharva Veda Dhama and "Ayamatma Brahma" is the nuclear slogan of such Peeth.

Sarada Peetha in the south at Srugeri in Karnataka was commissioned by Adishankaracharya during Judhistir Saka Sambat 2648 "490 BC" (Bikram Sambat). The peetha is associated with Jajurveda and the religious slogan was determined as "Aham Brahmasmi".

Adi Shankaracharya selected four saints of high scholastic efficiency as Shankaracharyas. Shree Padmapadacharya of Gobardhana Pitha, Shree Sureswaracharya of Kalika peetha, Shree Totakacharya of Jyotirpitha and Shree Hastamalakacharya of Sarada Peetha were the first Shankaracharyas of four Peethas. The principles of management of Peethas by Shankaracharyas were enunciated by Adishankaracharya in the books named as "Mathatmaya Mahanusasanam". The inheritance of Shankaracharya was determined by the scholarly attitude and efficiency of disciples and one after another were commissioned in four Peethas.

Adishankaracharya as the devotee of Lord Jagannath has declared for keeping 'Danda' i.e. the longstick by all Shankaracharyas compulsorily as that of the sign of Lord Visnu. Danda is the epitome of perseverance and philosophical determinations. Such tradition of accepting the ethics of Vishnu has been compulsorily adopted by all Shankaracharya. Adishankaracharya divided his disciples in ten groups as that of Saraswati, Bharati, Tirtha, Ashrama, Bana, Aranya, Parbata, Giri, Puri and Sagara. Out of



such groups of disciples, persons having higher knowledge of Vedas and having the ability for preaching of religions were declared as Saraswati. Scholars engaged in preaching Vedic knowledge in different organizations were declared as Bharati.

At present Swami Nischalananda Saraswati is the Shankaracharya of Gobarddhanapitha, Puri. The role of Shankaracharya at Puri is more important than that of other Shankaracharyas as he is the celebrated Guru of Shreekshestra. The visit of Shankaracharya to Jagannath Temple is ceremonial in nature as that of the visit of the King

of Nepal to the temple. During the car festival, Jagadaguru Shankaracharya is a special guest and has got the free access to the idols on the chariots in comparison to other saints visiting Puri during such period. Jagadaguru Shankaracharya is given the equal status as that of Gajapati Maharaja of Shreekshestra, Puri and during the religious disputes about different rites, the views of Jagadguru Sankaracharya have been considered more vital for taking final decision.

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‘ଉତ୍କଳ ପ୍ରସଙ୍ଗ’ ଏବଂ ‘ଓଡ଼ିଶା ରିଭ୍ୟୁ’ର ନୂତନ ଇ-ମେଲ୍ ଆଇ.ଡି.

ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସରକାରଙ୍କ ଦ୍ଵାରା ପ୍ରକାଶିତ ମାସିକ ପତ୍ରିକା ‘ଉତ୍କଳ ପ୍ରସଙ୍ଗ’ ଏବଂ ‘ଓଡ଼ିଶା ରିଭ୍ୟୁ’ର ଇ-ମେଲ୍ ଆଇ.ଡି. ବଦଳି ଯାଇଥିବାରୁ ପ୍ରକାଶନ ନିମନ୍ତେ ଲେଖାଗୁଡ଼ିକ ଏଣିକି ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ମାସରେ ପୁରୁଣା ଇ-ମେଲ୍ ଆଇ.ଡି. ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତେ ନୂତନ ଇ-ମେଲ୍ ଆଇ.ଡି. uporipr@gmail.comରେ ପଠାଇବା ନିମନ୍ତେ ଲେଖକ/ଲେଖକାମାନଙ୍କୁ ଅନୁରୋଧ କରାଯାଉଛି ।

ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦେଶକ
ସୂଚନା ଓ ଲୋକସମ୍ପର୍କ ବିଭାଗ
ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସରକାର



*"kadâcit kâlindî-tata-vipina-sangîtaka-
ravo
mudâbhîrî-nârî-vadana-kamalâsvâda-
madhupah
ramâ-ûambhu-brahmâmara-pati-
ganesârcita-pado
jagannâthah svâmî nayana-patha-gâmî
bhavatu me"*

*"bhuje savye venum sirasi sikhi-piccham
kati-tate
dukûlam netrânte sahadara-katâksam
vidadhate"*

Navel. While floating, the Navel turned into INDRANEELA MANI.

2. Finally the Navel and Jara Byadha reached the coast of Utkal (present Odisha). Jara Byadha took shelter here in the Alar Nath and started worshipping the Navel of Lord Krishna of NEELA MADHAVA. After many years Bishwabasu was ruling the Shavara Rajya. Jara Byadha was the top most ancestor of the Shavara Tribe. They worshipped Lord Neela Madhava as their KULA DEVATA.

Lord Sri Jagannath - Lord Sri Krishna Inseparable

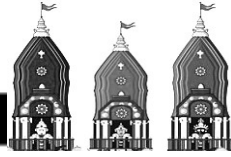
Dillip Kumar Samantaray

*sadâ srîmad-vrindâvana-vasati-lîlâ-
paricayo
jagannâthah svâmî nayana-patha-gâmî
bhavatu me"*

1. Lord Jagannath Mahaprabhu is actually Lord Krishna Himself. In Dwaraka when Lord Dwarakadhish Krishna departed from His material body being injured with the venomous arrow of Jara Byadha. Arjuna did the cremation of the Lord. But His Navel couldn't be burnt. So Arjuna immersed the Navel in the sea and Jara realising his big mistake followed the floating

3. King Indradyumna was very much devoted to Lord Krishna. He built a beautiful and big temple for Lord. But there is not any deity of Lord. So he ordered Brahmin Vidyapati to





search for Lord Krishna. Vidyapati finding in many places reached the Shavara Rajya. There he married Bishwabasu's daughter Lalita and requested the king for showing him the deity of Lord Neela Madhava. Bishwabasu tied his eyes and took him in to the forest. Clever Vidyapati sprinkled mustard seeds in the path so that he could find it later. At last he was able to see the Lord Neela Madhava and Rohini Kund (whoever takes bath in it, gains Lord Vishnu's Body) in the cave.

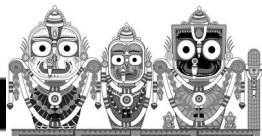
4. Vidyapati returned with Lalita and told king Indradyumna about the Lord Neela Madhava. King became very happy and went towards the Shavara kingdom with his army. He defeated Bishwabasu and went in to the forest pointing out the mustard plants. But the door of the cave was blocked with sand and the deity and Rohini Kund were vanished. Indradyumna tried to attempt suicide but Lord ordered him to return in his abode. The next day He will appear in a form of BRAHMA DARU. King returned. The next day at dawn Brahma Daru reached coast of Puri. King engaged thousands of labour and many elephants to lift the mysterious wood. But no one succeed. At last with order of Lord, Brahmin Vidyapati and Shavara king Vishwabasu were able to lift up the Brahma Daru.

5. The Divine Artist Vishwakarma became old Maharana and he can build the Deities of Sri Jagannath, Sri Balabhadra, Sri Subhadra only in 21 days. But the door would remain closed and no one can disturb him. If anybody opens the door between these 21 days, he will stop the work and will depart.

6. One day Queen Gundicha told king to open the door, as there is no sound of working. The king opened the door with anxiety and found

nowhere Maharana was there. He only found the Lords / Deities incompleated. Their Hands, Feet, Eyes, Mouth were not completed fully. King decided to suicide for his big mistake. But the Lord ordered to establish Them in the Temple in their present form. Maharana alias Vishwakarma placed in Divine Navel which is called BRAHMAVASTU, in the three deities' Heart Hole or HIYA.

7. Now what is the connection between Lord Krishna and Lord Jagannath. I think you can understand more and more. In the Dwapara Yuga one night Lord Krishna was crying for His Beloved Devotee Radharani. His third consort Satyabhama thought why He daily cried for Radha, who was she and what was the significance of the Vrindavana Leela ? She asked to Mother Rohini about it. Then Rukmini, Jambabati, Satyabhama and other consorts gathered in a hall and Devi Rohini Mata started to spread the nectar of the Vrindavana Leela among them. Subhadra was there, suddenly Balabhadra came and stood in the right side of Her and Krishna coming stood in the left side of Her. The three siblings were drawn by the lovely moments of Vrindavana Leela and their body parts became smaller and melted, eyes became bigger in joy. At the very time sage Narada came and Lord Krishna told him to ask for a boon. Narada said that the Brahma Swarupa of Lord Krishna which he is seeing now, many the world and universe see that. Lord agreed with Narada's prayer. Lord Krishna promised to be appeared as Lord Sri Jagannath with His two siblings Sri Balabhadra and Sri Subhadra in His present Form in the Age of Kali in Utkala. Presently the four deities stand in Ratna Simhasan for the devotees, and we devotees are awaiting His Karuna and Blessings. The four deities are in one Form.



Anyway, those devotees whose eyes are smeared with the salve of love will always see Me as Shyamasundara holding a flute. If your desire is to serve Me in opulence, then from time to time I may be decorated with hands and feet made of Gold or Silver. You should certainly know, however, that my limbs are the ornaments of all ornaments. So Shvetashvatara Upanishad says: apani-pada javano grahita pashyatyacakshuh sashri notyapurnah sa vetti vedyam na ca tasyati vetta tom ahur agryam purusham muhalstam.

“Without legs and hands, He moves and accepts. Without eyes He sees, and without ears He hears – He knows all that is knowable, but no one knows Him. They call Him the original ‘Supreme person’”. To protect to this assertion of the Vedas, Lord Jagannath takes His form without hands and legs. Still Lord Jagannath is able to accept fifty-six different types of food, offered eight times daily, and He tours the world in His splendid carts.

“Karshati iti Krishna”

His name also means the excuser of all mistakes. Taking anyone name and its substance a devotee can reach Krishna. In such a way He is a peculiar and unique Avatar to the world.

Many divine souls and Avatars have come to the world, but only Sri Krishna was called the “Poorna Avatar”, the full Avatar having all 16 kalas; or divine arts or attributes within Him. They are as follows:

Daya – Compassion

Dharya – Patience

Kshama – Forgiveness

Naya – Justice

Nirapeksha – Impartiality

Nirasakta – Detachment

Tapasya – Meditation and spiritual power

Aparchitta - Invincibility

Danasheel – Beneficence, Bestower of all wealth in the world and nature

Saundaryamaya – Beauty Incarnate

Nrityajna – Best of Dancers

Sangitajna – Best of Singers

Neetibadi – Embodiment of Honesty

Satyabadi – Truth Itself

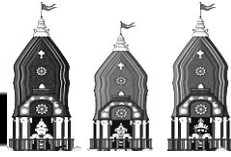
Sarvagnta – Perfect master of all arts, such as poetry, drama, painting etc.

Sarvaniyanta – Controller of All

Krishna is Brahmanda pati, “Lord of all the universes, of which this world is only a small part. There are numerous universes not even seen or knowable. So Narada tells that for this reason alone all should take shelter in Him.”

In Odia version of Bhagavata, it is told, “Brahmanda mala mala hoi - To lomakupe Birajai” - “Whole universe is revolving around Me, I am here to care for all.”

In spiritual recognition Nirmalya is equally important as Mahaprasad. According to “Skanda Puran” Lord Jagannath redeems the devotees by permitting them to partake His mahaprasad, to have His darshan and to worship Him by observing rituals and by offerings. Mahaprasad is treated here ‘Anna Brahma’. There are char Dhams where it defines the special importance of the said religious place in India as such Puri, (Srikshetra), Rameswar, Dwarika and Badrinath are believed to have been liked by Lord Vishnu intimately. It is said and believed that He takes His bath at Rameswaram, meditates at Badrinath, dines at Puri and retires at Dwarika. It is given therefore



a lot of importance to the temple food Mahaprasad (Not simply Prasad) here at Puri. The temple kitchen has got the capacity to cook for lakh of devotees. The said devotees get pleasure from taking mahaprasad for which the devotion comes to the heart and his feeling handily is very joyful to everybody. The traditional culture and Parampara is presently continuing as Sri Jagannath Mahaprabhu- Lord Sri Krishna inseparable. On

every spiritual occasion Sri Krishna as Madan Mohan represents for Lord Jagannath in Jagannath Temple, Puri.

Jay Jagannath Swami.

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Searching for Divine Blessings

Sudipta Mishra

O my Lord Jagannath, I feel you everywhere
I don't need to seek you at any temple,
I sense the fragrance of mustard flowers
I paint myself as Lolita,
I recreate the character of Bidyapati.

Let me be your Radha
With the blue hues of unknown desires,
I again passionately dance by refusing everyone
Nay, I don't think about anyone,
It's about my Lord and my sublime longings
Nobody can realize my hidden quest,
An urge to be one with my Supreme power.

An indomitable craving to have a glimpse of my
lord,
It's not a mad pursuit of a jester,
It's my journey on a thorny path,

It is my challenge to the orthodox world,
After a tedious trip of million years.

Now, I can behold my lord
He is smiling there
Everywhere there is the scent of musk
Oh, is it real-world or my dream?

From a charismatic realm,
I fall in the middle of somewhere
In an intimate embrace with a dazzling flash
I lay bare in a luminous halo
Now I am one with the ultimate being
With an altered vision, now I can rest forever...

Sudipta Mishra, Research Scholar, CVU, Puri, Boarding
Square, Puri.





In Vaikuntha, Bhagawan Vishnu lives and along with other things enjoys food prepared by the supreme mother Mahalaxmi (“yatranapachika Laksmih swayambhukta Janardana, tasmadnnambiprase daivatairapidurlavam”) while Maa Saraswati soothes him with her celestial veena. This is where other deities including Dhanwantari (the divine physician) remain in attendance to carry out his instruction in an environment of absolute peace and tranquility. Whenever He falls ill Dhanwantari treats him. It is believed, Vishnu in his corporeal form is stunningly embellished in the seaside temple of



Pateli flower

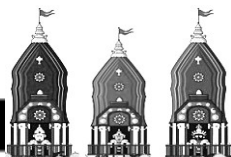
Peerless Dashamula

Dr. Durga Nandan Mishra

Rameshwaram; graces Puri (BrahmaPurana waxes eloquent on this religious tirtha “Yatha sarvesvara Visnu sarvalokottamatamah/ tatha samasta-tirthanam varistham purusottamam/ aste yatra svayam devo muktidah purusottamam/ dhanyaste vivudhapraksya ye basanti kule narah”) is offered ‘chhapan bhog’ for his gustatory exploration; He goes onwards to Shri Badrinath, where he meditates for the welfare of humanity; and retires for the day in Dwarka. Since He eats in Puri, this temple serves Mahaprasad to all devotees irrespective of any distinction. In his human like avatara, He passes through many a

ritual daily and annually as well at Shree Jagannath Temple e.g., after the annual bath festival (snanapurnami), He falls ill and to cure him, dashamula modaka is offered. The world famous rathayatra soon follows.

The contents of dashamula is a secrecy. Although stated as mula (root), it’s not so because it comprises of five small plants and the bark of five big trees. The former called laghu mula and the later bruhat mula. Pateli is part of the former and is known in different places in different names such as, Petari (Bengali); Indian mallow (English);



Khapat, Kansi, and Atibala; Kanghi (Gujarati); Kanghi, Kakahi (Hindi); Dabi, Uram (Malayalam); Dabli; Mudra, and Petari (Marathi); Pateli (Odisha); Tutturubenda (Punjabi); Atibala (Sanskrit); and Shrimad rigida, Tutti, Paniara, and Hutti (Tamil); Pili buti, Tutti, and Tutturubenda (Telugu). But its common name in botany is Abutilo Indian mallow since it belongs to Abutilon Species. Pateli (Abutilon Indicum) is a perennial shrub that grows up to eight feet in height. Each of its parts such as, roots, stem, branches, fruits, and flowers have distinct medicinal properties and together (sarbanga) their impact on illness is different as well. In future, how this slender tropical plant fights challenges both human and ecological wherein millions of acres of forest around the world are destroyed or degraded is a matter of huge concern.

Pateli's medicinal properties are well illustrated in Ayurveda, Siddha, and Unani such as: it is used to control diarrhoea, tuberculosis, bronchitis, rheumatism, blood dysentery, mumps, toothache, pulmonary congestions, urinary disease, jaundice, piles, and in healing wounds. It is anti-inflammatory and anti-cancer. The main traditional systems of medicine use this plant to cure fever, joint disorders, and as a uterine tonic, anti-diabetic, and as an aphrodisiac. Traditionally, its roots and bark are used as aphrodisiac, anti-diabetic; seeds are used in urinary disorders and in the treatment of cough. I recently read, pateli destroys cancer cells in the body and now somehow believe the contents of a conversation with a younger friend whose acquaintance was

turned back in the last stage of this disease from a reputed cancer hospital but consuming dashamula he was still alive. This was of course a few years back. I am still skeptical and never inquired as to its veracity. It is really surprising to know how we have chosen this plant for the treatment of Shree Jagannath and his siblings hundreds of years before its medicinal properties are now being confirmed by researchers and physicians.



Lime or water of the Ganges is used for purification of the area where dashamula is prepared. The ingredients in equal measure (each weighing say forty gms.) are ground together after thorough drying in the sun; and finally sieved to separate roughages. In a brass pot

very small amount of water (250ml approx) is put, then khua (one kg or so) is put in boiling water to dissolve it. Soon sugar (nearly 2kgs) is added to it. When it appears to be sticky, the powder is added and thoroughly stirred. While hot, it is poured in patches on banana leaves spread on the floor. While it is still hot, with little ghee on the palm, it is made in to small modak balls. In three small new red earthen pots, 21-31 modakas are sprinkled with powdered camphor on them and covered with banana leaves. These three earthen containers are put together in a palm leaf bhogei. Dashamula is deposited in the garada inside the temple with the temple commander on dashami afternoon, nine days after snanapurami. Later it is offered to the deities on ekadasi and the period of convalescence ends.



It may be stated the holy bath of Shree Jagannatha, Shree Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra, and Shree Sudarshana is celebrated with éclat in Puri Temple on the fullmoon of Jyestha. The deities, then, on account of excessive ablution suffer from fever; and to lessen the indisposition, a dimly lit noiseless ambience is provided in the anabasaragruha (tatighara, a bamboo reed enclosure) in front of the sanctum sanctorum. The deities, during this period of convalescence, are worshipped without any extravagance; and access of public to them is forbidden. As per practice, white clothes and flowers (white & odourless) adorn the deities; and they are offered sick diet comprising of a mixture (pana) of milk, sugar, and camphor along with seasonal native fruits. These rituals of anabasara linked to the attire, diet, and above all the environment emit distinct impression regarding the involvement of the Vaidya. After consuming the medicinal concoction of dashamula, the cured deities, at the end of anabasara, appear for navajauvana darshana before the car festival. You may take a holistic view, and realise, the Almighty's rituals are mostly geared on human life and thus He comes closer to humans; and we need to take the opportunity to take part in any one but still those who are Hindus but remain aloof and insolent miss the train.

You may know, to Kerala, servitors living around the world return to perform their religious duties at least once and feel gratified. I only perform a traditional annual seva to Mahabahu

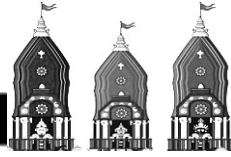
which has run through several centuries with hiccups and not a physician with a tradable commodity. I have been doing this seva since my bratopanayana and enjoying his benign blessings. A couple of months back, I somehow foresaw



my final journey is imminent, thus got the house whitewashed and that was in March. Told my younger son how things are arranged for preparing dashamula. Same month one morning, I slumped while sitting on bed. The next day, I had brain surgery; and another, six days after. A fortnight later, neurosurgeon Prof Panigrahi was surprised seeing changes in the then reports, and uttered

‘wonderful’; and to which I responded, I live in a spiritual world as well. Later I was discharged from the hospital. You won’t believe, at this time someone kept an arecanut sized dashamula on the table three feet away from me picking it from the floor. I could only see it as my hands and feet were tied to the bed in the ICU, I was surprised, possibly my son could have placed it earlier in the records he handed over to the doctors. After taking a nap, I could not see it again, may be a case of coincidence. But why here ?

Anyone rendering any service to Shree Jagannath, Shree Balabhadra, and Maa Subhadra are always immersed in their ‘krupabari’. In Shrimadbhagwat Geeta it is stated, “ananyachetah satatam yo mam smaranti nityasah, tasyaha ? sulabha partha nityayuktasya yogina ?.” Only He can bring stability to life which is like a drop of



water on a lotus leaf. His twenty rupees for this seva is at least twenty pieces of diamond to me. For me the mana (measuring bowl) was full, the (sera) seer was full, and I was ready for the journey, but who intervened over such a blissful painless coma/death ? As servitors we are fortunate enough but life is short lived, as individuals we are destined to die but Shree Jagannath would continue, Jagannathism would flourish.

Mahabahu, my prayer is to behold you in Vaikuntha where there is no sorrow and pain but instead perennial happiness and contentment.

Jay Jagannath.

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A Hymn To The Lord

Prabhudutt Dash

You are the master creator of the Universe.
Your grace is infinite and immeasurable.
You are the cause of all causes.
Your mercy is unfathomable and limitless.

For the protection of the good.
For the destruction of the evil.
And for the preservation of the righteous.
You are born from age to age.

You are the supreme personality of Godhead.
You are the eternal well-wisher of mankind.
Devotion or pure bhakti is the means to attain
Your blessings and compassion.
You are won by surrender and unalloyed faith.

The world is besieged by war, strife, calamities
and global pandemic.
Inhumanity, sectarian violence, apartheid,

fundamentalism are destroying world
peace and amity.
Vulgarity, vandalism, atrocity and violence are
ruining the humanity.
Mankind is at crossroads losing
hope and morality.

Oh; Lord, You are our refuge in the troubled times.
You are our anchorage and seat of worship.
We pray for Your guiding light to save us
from the morass of confusion and despair.
We have unflinching faith and trust in Your
divinity and immortality.

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Abstract

The poets and writers express their views on the prevailing system, tradition, and custom in their writings. They raise their voices against ill practices in the society through different characters and plot. They understand the people's belief in mythology and mythological characters. People of Odisha known as Odias accept Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra, sister Goddess Subhadra and Goddess Lakshmi as their supreme Gods and Goddesses. Balaram Das, one of the famous Odia devotional poets is a great devotee of Lord Jagannatha. His remarkable work *Manabasa Lakshmi Purana* reflects the social evils like class distinction, casteism and marginalization of women. He tries to remove all these social evils through this with depiction of Odia popular Gods and Goddesses.

Keywords: Manabasa, Gurubara, Purana, Chandaluni, Custom



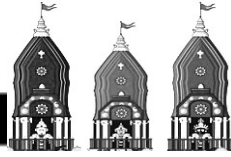
Lakshmi Purana : A Tale of Marginalization and Reformation

Dr. Natabar Jena



Men of Letters express their concern about the tradition, social evils, exploitation and marginalized community in their works. Some of them even present the social dogma through mythological characters to draw the attention of the readers and create consciousness on the need of reformation in the prevalent society. Balaram Das, one of the most popular poets of Panchasakha in Odia literature is remembered in every house of Odisha for his work *Lakshmipurana*. 'Manabasa Gurubara' has been added to the National list of intangible Cultural Heritage of India on 18th April 2019.

Balaram Das appears to be a social reformer and analyst for his work *Lakshmi Purana*. The upper caste people like Brahmins restrict the poor section of lower caste people to offer certain pujas even in their own homes. They are not allowed to perform any kind of worship and enter the temples. They are termed as 'Untouchables'. The poet depicts the pitiable condition of lower caste women in a conservative society. The paper aims to project the position of untouchable women and the need of equanimity for a healthy and progressive society. It also presents the tradition of Odia people related to



worship of Goddess Lakshmi in the agrarian background. The depiction of characters like most lovable and respectable Hindu Gods and Goddesses like Lord Jagannatha, Lord Balabhadra and Goddess Lakshmi seems to be more acceptable among Odia families.

‘Manabasa Gurubara’ is a popular festival in Odisha. Most of Odia cultivators harvest paddy crops in the Odia month of Margasira. Goddess Lakshmi is believed to be the Goddess of wealth, peace and prosperity. Every Odia women worship Her on Gurubar (Thursday) in the Odia month of Margasira with lot of devotion and expectation. The purana begins with the description of the travelling of saint Narada and Parashara on the earth. Narada is astonished to see the observation of ‘Manabasa Gurubara’ by every Odia caste. In the Brahminic dominated Hindu society, the people of lower castes are not allowed to perform worship of certain Gods and Goddesses. The worship of Goddess Lakshmi by all the castes is an exceptional matter.

Kahakaha tapibara ekisa charita
Braahmana chandala aadi samasta jaatire
Karuchhanti ki utsaba aananda matire (p.4)

Shriya is an important character of *Lakshmi Purana*. The poet portrays her character with a purpose of showing how Gods or Goddesses do not differentiate the persons on the basis of social status or caste. The ‘untouchables’ are not allowed to live with other people in villages. Being conscious of her social position, Shriya distances her residence from other higher castes. She strictly adheres to the rules and rites of Lakshmi Puja. She cleans her house with ‘Gomaya’ (cow dung mixed in water). She decorates the doorstep with ‘Chita’ or ‘Jhoti’ made by fine rice and water paste. She collects

paddy and sincerely does worship according to the custom. The poet has high praise for Shriya’s devotion and sincere efforts in performing worship.

Shriya Chandaluni nagara baahare ta ghar
Tahara mahimaje debanku agochara. (p.11)

The other aspect of ‘*Manabasa Gurubara*’ is that the caste barriers are man-made. Hindu mythology focuses how the true devotees get blessing of Gods and Goddesses irrespective of caste, creed, colour and position. The dedicated persons with their pure soul gets divine blessing. Their activities and simple nature attract Gods and Goddesses. Being moved by Shriya’s devotion and humility, Goddess Lakshmi comes to her hut to bless her.

Muhi chhara hina jati najanai puni
Chandala Sahi re ghara puni Chandaluni
Daande daande jaauthile Bishnu patarani
Sahi naparile chandaluni ra dayini. (p.12)

Shriya represents the so-called ‘untouchables’ in the society. The other name of Goddess Lakshmi is Shriya. The poet has tried to create awareness about scornful custom of casteism in the society. Every Odia people worship Lord Jagannatha as their saviour. They know about the story of Lord Jagannath’s devotee Dasia Bauri, a man of low caste. He was forbidden to enter the temple due to his low birth. According to a belief that Lord Jagannatha personally came to him and took the coconut from his hand to prove the futility of showing pride of taking birth in high caste family.

Caste discrimination is a social evil which annoys the poet Balaram Das. Through the character of Lord Balabhadra, he points out the prevalent conservative attitude towards women



and the downtrodden community. He does not excuse Goddess Lakshmi for visiting Shriya Chandaluni's house. The poet presents the typical view of untouchability through the character of Lord Balabhadra.

Dekha dekha Kahnai to bharija achara
Ubhaa hoi achhaije Chandaluni ghara
Haadi ghare thiba Lakshmi paana thiba ghare
Snaana nakarina badadeule pashiba
Ehi rupe sabudine deula pasuchhi
Dui goti bhaainku bitaala karauchhi. (p.13)

The poet disapproves the attitude of conservative society towards women. A woman takes all the responsibilities of her home, but she is considered inferior to a man. When Lord Jagannatha tells Lord Balabhadra to excuse Goddess Lakshmi, His elder brother tells the insignificant position of a woman in a family.

Bharija re karya jebe achhire Kahnai
Chandala Saahire nagra tola beg ejai

Balaram boluchhanti suna Bhabagrahi
Tora Lakshmi thile muhin rahibain naahin,
Bhaarija atai sina paadara paandhoi
Bhai thile koti Bharija milije parai . (p.14)

The poet further depicts the attitude of male dominated society towards women. The society believes that a woman's chief duty is cooking for family members. Lord Balabhadra considers this work as an easy work which can be done by even men. He asks his younger brother Lord Jagannatha to drive away Goddess Lakshmi for her sympathy and visit to low castes in society.

Balarama Kahuchhanti sunare Kahnai
Bhaarija chhara emanta ku kahu achhu tuhi
Kaahara bharijaa jebe rusihaji jaae

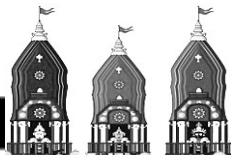
Taara gruhastha ki bhaata raandhina nakhaee.
(p.24)

Man and woman form family and society. Generally, a woman cooks and feeds the family and a man works outside home. The character of Goddess Lakshmi criticizes the attitude of a male dominated society towards woman. When Lord Jagannatha and Balabhadra try to cook themselves, Goddess Lakshmi realizes the effort of male members to show the inferiority of a woman and her work at home. She thinks its impact in the society.

Gruhe Maha Lakshmi thai bichara je kale
Raandhina Bhunjibe jebe ehi duhi bhaai
Naarinku purusha aau lodibe kimpaii.
(p.31-32)

The *Lakshmi Purana* ends with the abolition of untouchability and victory of women over men. The two brothers Lord Jagannatha and Lord Balabhadra have to suffer a lot for their treatment to Goddess Lakshmi. They do not get food, water, honour and means of living. They have to wander like beggars for their living from place to place. They finally get food and every comfort from Goddess Lakshmi. They called Her as Chandaluni, a woman of low caste in society. The pride of high caste is broken down in this 'Puran'. Goddess Lakshmi speaks her husband Lord Jagannath and Lord Balabhadra about the futility of high birth.

Mahalakshmi Kahuchhanti prabhuku anaai
Chandaluni boli mote dela ghaudaai
Chandaluni ghare ebe bhunjile gosaaain ...
Dhika tumbha badapana dhika tumbha katha
Podu tumbhara pratijna dhika tumbha bhrata.
(p.39)



The poet Balaram Das breaks the barrier between upper and lower caste in *Lakshmi Purana*. He further wishes to abolish casteism from Lord Jagannatha temple. Goddess Lakshmi puts the condition of abolition of untouchability in 'Srimandira' before returning to the temple. Both brothers agree to Her condition for a casteless environment of temple. Both Gods realize importance of a woman and equal status to women in a society. "Caste discrimination must be abolished from Srimandira and all must be treated equal in the Court of Lord." (Mishra, 58) The poet through the character of Goddess Lakshmi gives the comment as

Jagata Mata boile tumbhe kara satya
Chandalu Brahmana jaae khiakhoi hebe
Samaste khaaina hasta jale na dhoibe
Haadira hastu Brahmana chhadai khaibe
Anna khai sarbe munde pochhu thibe hasta
Tebe bada deula ku jibi Jagannatha
Heu heu boli aajna dele Mahabahu
Juge-juge Lakshmi go tumbhara jasha rahu.
(p.40)

Women empowerment is another important aspect of this Purana. "Balaram Das encourages the women to raise their voice against any sort of injustice done to them and inspires them to fight for justice instead of remaining silent. He provides them courage, strength and mental power through the book "*Lakshmi Purana*." (Mishra 57-58) In the beginning part of this Purana Lord Balabhadra shows the superiority of men over women in the society. They have to suffer a lot when Goddess Lakshmi leaves them and the temple. The pride and superiority of men tumbles as they have to wander without any food, water and shelter. The poet describes the suffering of a man without wife and the need of a woman in a family through the character of Lord Jagannath.

Rabi tale sabu juge sujasha rakhila
Tumbha joge aambhe kasta pailu bahuta
Ambhe bhiksha magibara janila jagata
Tumbha jayakirti ebe jagate rahila. (p.40)

Balarama kahuchhanti sunare Kanhai
Ghara ku gharani sina sundara dishai. (p.40)

Conclusion

Balaram Das's *Manabasa Lakshmi Purana* reflects the prevailing social living condition. The Purana criticises the social dogmas and tries to reform the society. There is the need of equal status and facilities to all the people of the society. The women are as important as men in a family and also in a society. This Purana is very popular story in every Odia houses as the characters are prime Gods and Goddess in Odia family.

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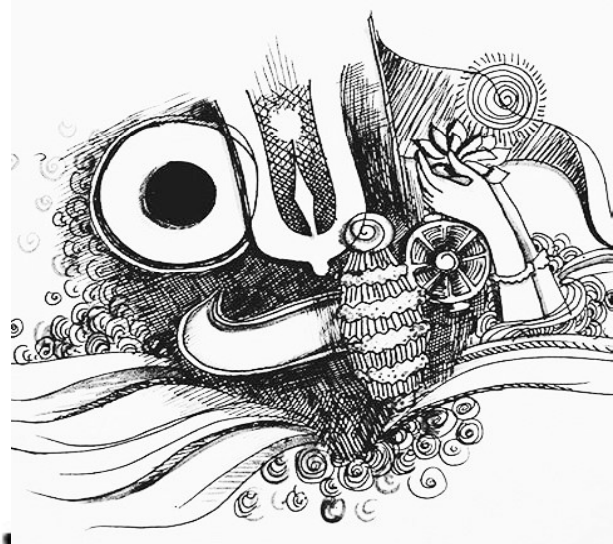
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Odisha's traditional culture is a combination of varieties; so diversity is found in Jagannath culture and Lord Jagannath is considered the most revered deity of Odisha. Diversity means collective differences, such differences mark off one group of people from other. These differences may be biological, religious, linguistic etc. On the basis of religious differences we have religious diversity. Racial diversity is analysed on the basis of biological differences such as black and white, (Aryan and Dravidian). When a group of people share similar characteristics such as language, religion etc, more uniformity is found in such case, whereas, group of people who come from different



Jagannath Dham : Replica of Indian Culture

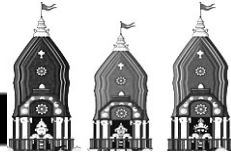
Sudhansu Sekhar Das

racess, religion and language etc, they represent diversity.

In Odisha different castes, tribes and religious groups are found, they worship their religious leaders and Gurus according to their own tradition. At the same time, different castes and tribal groups of Odisha celebrate car festivals of Lord Jagannath as per their own regional customs. In this way Jagannath culture is maintained among diversified castes and tribes of Odisha. Odisha is multi-ethnic, multi-linguistic, multi-religious and multi-racial society. Different people worship differently. They have different

faiths, different ideologies according to their own religion. In Odisha, the vast population is composed of people having different creeds, customs and colours. In this way Jagannath culture is determined in different shades.

However, it is a fact that Odisha's Jagannath culture is based on its tradition, religion, language, folkways, etc. So diversification is observed in Jagannath culture. Jagannath culture starts from 'Jagannath Dham, Puri' (eastern Odisha) continues to West, North and Southern parts of Odisha like Aska and Gajapati. It spreads in diversified geographical areas of Odisha. Within



the territory different castes, tribes, linguistic groups are residing together, so sometimes conflict may take place in the name of religion, castes, colours, which is a biggest challenge against cultural unity. There are several diversifying factors among which communality, casteism, linguism and regionalism are notable.

Communality in the society refers to feelings of rivalries based on religious differences. But ‘Jagannath culture’ stands much above all these narrowness. **Though, in Hindu culture variety of sub-cultural and sub-linguistic groups are found but they all believe in one God, Lord Jagannath, one culture that is Jagannath culture which teaches us to love, care and respect all human beings.**

Though there are varieties in terms of geographical boundaries within Odisha, but its evolution is associated with all the geographical territories. The Jagannath culture is a part and parcel of life of the people in these geographical boundaries. There are different Jagannath temples found in different areas, different people performed their rites and rituals as per their local traditions. In this way geographical diversification is found in the Jagannath Culture. Unlike geographical diversification, cultural diversification is found in the Jagannath Culture. Shreekshestra of Puri Jagannath, as is commonly known, can verily be said to be a truthful replica of Indian culture. The impact of culture of Lord Jagannath in Odia literature has been such that it has moulded into a composite literature revolving round the culture of Lord Jagannath. The Odia script and Odia literature are nothing, but manifestation of various aspects of Lord Jagannath in the eyes of the poets and literary Pundits. To understand this culture, one has to have some idea of the history of this land, which again is different

from that of other countries of the world. Starting from Lord Jagannath Himself, history has it that he was a tribal deity, adorned by the Sabar people, as a symbol of Narayan. Another legend claims him to be Nilamadhava, an image of Narayana made of blue stone and worshipped by the aboriginals.

He was brought to Nilagiri (blue mountain) or Nilachala and installed there as Shree Jagannath in company with Balabhadra and Subhadra. The images made of wood are also claimed to have their distant linkage with the aboriginal system of worshipping wooden poles. To cap it all the Daitapatis, who have a fair share of responsibilities to perform rituals of the Temple, are claimed to be descendants of the aboriginals or hill tribes of Odisha. So we may safely claim that the beginning of the cultural history of ‘Shreekshestra’ is found in the fusion of Hindu and Tribal Cultures. So diversification is found in the origin of Jagannath culture. In this way caste, culture and traditional diversification are absorbed in the Jagannath Culture. This has been accepted as a facet of our proud heritage. The three deities came to be known as the symbols of Samyak Darshan, Samyak Jnana and Samyak Charita usually regarded as Triratha (of the Jain cult), an assimilation of which leads to Moksha (salvation) or the ultimate bliss.

In the remote past, Odisha was inhabited by the aboriginal tribes, who had a civilization and culture quite distinct from that of the Vedic Aryans. The Aryans migrated to Odisha at a later stage and the Vedic religion and culture along with the Upanisadic philosophy and Smarta rituals then began to spread in this country. Buddhism had better times during the rule of the Mauryan emperor Asoka, who conquered Kalinga (the coastal region of Odisha as known by that time)



after a dreadful war in the third century B.C. It is said that after the conquest of Kalinga, Asoka abandoned violence, embraced Buddhism and left no stone unturned to propagate it throughout India including the newly conquered Kalinga. It continued to be popular in Odisha for several centuries before Shankaracharya visited Puri in the ninth century A.D. Jainism was perhaps at the height of its glory when Kharavela espoused its cause and took all steps to propagate it in the second century B.C. It is, therefore, historically reasonable to hold that the cult and culture of Jagannatha found its origin in the primitive system of worship of the non-Aryan tribals who had established a shrine for Jagannatha here, in this part of the country in a very ancient time, with all their religious fervour. Then the Aryans had taken it over to worship Jagannatha in Vedic rites and rituals with all religious practices connected with them. Buddhism and Jainism have penetrated into the innermost apartments of the shrine of Jagannatha with all their religious and spiritual implications. There are different rites; rituals and the day-to-day service (Niti-kanti) of Lord Jagannatha which owe their origin either to Jainism or to Buddhism, or may be the combination of both, it is difficult to say that, but there are diversities found in those practices. As it is mentioned earlier that the Puranic texts corroborate that Jagannatha was originally a deity of the aboriginal tribes and was known as Nila Madhava, his image being made of some sort of blue stone. Later, the god manifested himself in the form of four wooden images that we worship now and came to be known by the present-day names in an atmosphere of Vedic re-orientation.

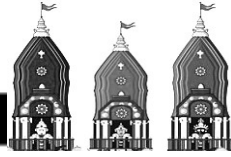
Thus, Jagannatha is equally claimed by the aboriginal tribes and the Vedic Hindus to be their original deity of worship. When we think of the Puri temple, we also think of the presiding

deities therein as well as the pattern of cultural life that is in vogue around it, which inspire the pilgrims with the lofty ideal of emotional integration in the country. Hence the cult of Jagannatha as we call it now (by way of translating the words Jagannatha Dharma) has to be understood, interpreted and appreciated with all its social, cultural, religious and spiritual implications. At a time when Jagannatha gained immense popularity, all important religious cults and creeds known to the people of India in those days were assimilated into the texture of Jagannath Cult. Such a broad based system of religious life is not to be found anywhere in the world.

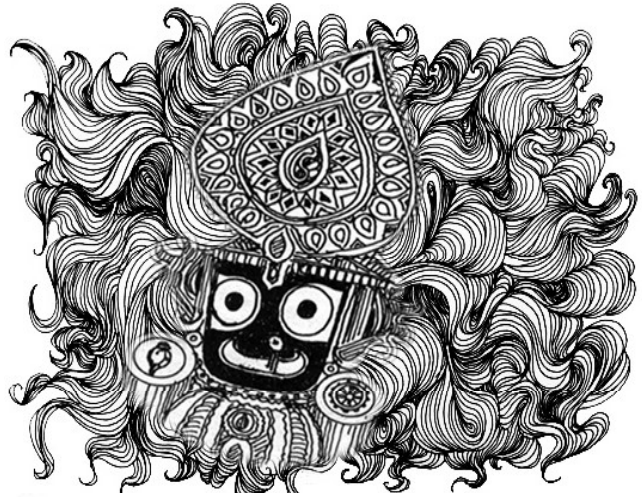
Lord Jagannath is worshipped in different names by different devotees as Vishnu or Narayana or Krishna and Lord Balabhadra as Shesha. Simultaneously, the deities are regarded as the Bhairava (Shiva, the formidable) with Vimala (the Bhairavi or the consort of Shiva) installed in the campus of the Puri temple. So ultimately we find a fusion of Saivism, Shaktism and Vaishnavism of the Hindu religion with Jainism and up to an extent Buddhism in the culture of Jagannath and the cultural tradition so reverently held together in Shreekshestra.

The very name "Jagannath" is not confined to a single heart, single mind, single person only, this name has a wider connotation, it is beyond our reach, it is popularly known as "Jagatara Natha" means 'master of whole world', so it can not be confined to one soul. Despite different diversification of Jagannath culture in terms of caste, colour, religion, ethnicity, Odisha's Jagannath culture is world famous because of its unique culture which is a replica of Indian Culture.

Sudhansu Sekhar Das, Maindipur, Baisimouza, Jagatsinghpur.



The sacred place of Puri or Purusottam in the East assumed increasing prominence through ages as one of the four famous Dhams, others being Badrinath in the North, Dwaraka in the West and Rameswaram in the South. It was recognized by Adi Shankaracharya as one of the eminent places of pilgrimage in the eighth century A.D. Puri assumed more and more importance as great Vaishnava Acharyas like Sri Ramanuja, Sri Vishnuswami, Sri Nimbark and Sri Madhavacharya visited this place. Subsequently, it was visited by great saints of various religious communities namely Nanak, Kabir, Sri Chaitanya



Jagannath Culture : Symbol of Social Justice and Unity

Er. Divine Das

and so on. It was compared with Kashi, Mathura, Vrindavan, Ujjain, Prayag, Gaya, Ayodhya and other sites of pilgrimage. Lord Jagannath is the presiding deity of Puri and a prominent symbol of Hindu Kingdom. The Gajapati King of Puri was recognized as the supreme royal authority, for safeguarding the hoary traditions and long-ranging rituals, year-round festivals with all Pujas, Veshas, Prasads and Mahaprasads. But the king did not claim any supremacy rather he was humble, loyal, devoted and committed to the famous traditions and heritage honoured by all sections of Hindu community. The king however, felt himself as the

regarded as the moving god (Chalanti Vishnu), the temporal incarnation of god. The glory of Lord Jagannath and supremacy of the king are acknowledged by all because of this uniqueness of Jagannath culture. Lord Jagannath is also known as Lord Vishnu : The cosmic sustainer of the phenomenal universe and bestower of salvation or moksha. He is the supreme god of all sects. Though, Vaisnava saints advocated for worship of different forms of Vishnu Avatars or incarnations like Nrusimha, Krisna, Rama, Narayana, Gopinatha, Madhava, Ananta Sayana and Vasudeva, other Vaisnavite sects treated



Jagannatha as Krishna. Odishan Vaisnavas consider Jagannatha as the combined body of Radha and Krishna. This would explain that Jagannath represents an assimilation of all religious cults, creeds and sectarian philosophies that come under the purview of Hinduism. There is a saying in Odisha that 'In Puri, there is no caste system. In other temples of India, people of some castes are not allowed into the inner apartments, but in the Puri temple, they are not only allowed to have entry, but people of these castes discharge certain specific duties and services for the performance of some traditional rites for Jagannath. It is evident from this practice that Lord Jagannath accepts all into Him. He is much beyond the casteist feelings. He is, therefore, casteless.

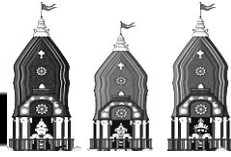
Though, Jagannath culture is spreading from one location to another, but starting from East to West, North to South, people of Odisha believe in 'one God', 'Lord Jagannath', who is the supreme of all powers and caretaker of everyone. Be it his food Mahaprasad or be it his place Srikshetra is so pure, holy and spiritual, which binds every devotee under one roof. This sense of 'uniqueness', 'belongingness' binds every heart and soul in one culture which exists beyond boundary. This is more prominent during car festival, people from different corners of the world gather in one geographical area of Puri Badadanda or Srikshetra to celebrate the world famous car festival of Lord Jagannath. This is the true symbol of "unity in diversity" of Jagannath culture.

The Car Festival held in June-July every year is symbolic of many lofty ideals of a highly developed society where equality in treatment and of opportunities are considered to be the fundamental right of every individual. When theosophy and religion are viewed from this point,

it becomes imperative that everybody should be treated as equal in the eyes of God. The Car Festival, participated by lakhs of pilgrims from the whole of India and abroad, has a number of rituals or practices in connection with the pulling of the chariots and the journey of Jagannatha to the Gundicha Temple. One of the rituals is called Chherapahanra. This literally means the sweeping of the floor. On this occasion, when the deities are brought from the main temple and placed on the special seats designed for them on the chariots, the Raja of Puri who is recognized as the scion of the earlier sovereign emperors of Odisha is required to sweep the floor of the chariots in front of the deities with a golden broom-stick. Thousands of eyes watch the performance with rapt attention. Amidst uproarious clapping, the mammoth gathering offers its felicitations to the traditional head of the State as he performs the duties of a sweeper. Needless to say, this rituals or practice is symbolic of the highest form of social justice, equality and unity that has remained an objective to be realized by humanity in all walks of life. It, no doubt, maintains unique culture of unity in diversity through rendering services to Lord Jagannath.

Though, the people of Odisha is different from each other on the basis of their caste, colour, religion and linguistic groups but everyone believes on one religious leader who is none other than Lord Jagannath, who protects everyone from all distress. However, each religious book teaches us the same humanity to help poor and needy, to protect the women's dignity, to respect elderly person, above all maintain unity in diversity.

Thousands of people, artists, artisans, producers and priests are employed through generations. Specific potteries and paintings are



required at a large scale. Pandas and Purohits, Pandits, dancers and musicians are engaged in various rituals and festivities. Various specific services are rendered by people through hereditary arrangements. Previously hundreds of acres of land were given to these people through endowments. The systems of Pattachitra paintings, the Chamar Seva and of the Devadasis are very specific to the Puri temple. Similarly Chitrakaras are required for preparing Pattachitra and painting the idols of gods etc in the temple and chariots during festivals. These people mostly live in some lanes in and around the Puri town and the village like Raghurajpur. Similarly various kinds of potteries are prepared by some people who enjoy this right through endowments of land from ancient times.

The Odishan art, literature and music are influenced immensely by Sri Jagannath Culture. The traditional Mahari dance Odissi dance, classical songs, are mostly developed under the influence of Lord Jagannath and His favourite lyrics of Geeta Govinda was composed by the immortal poet Jayadev. Many poems and fictions are also written under the influence of Sri Jagannath culture. A lot of folk tales, folk songs, proverbs etc. are also influenced by Sri Jagannath culture. Mahaprasad has acquired a special and significant position in the life and religion of Odisha. The cookery of Srimandir is known as the largest cooking system. The sanctity of this holy food is boundless and it is known as a sacred bond between gods and men and among the people. It is interesting to note that Mahaprasad is not only delicious, but also enjoyed by all irrespective of caste, creed and religion. A deep sanctity and significance is attached to the culture of Lord Jagannath not only by Hindus, but also by many people belonging to other religions.

Lord Jagannath is not only the presiding deity of Odisha, but also His temple is regarded as the nerve centre controlling all socio-cultural activities of Odia people. It is a fact that non-Hindus are not admitted into the Puri temple, but the Hindus of all castes including the aboriginal tribes, the Jains, the Sikhs and the Buddhists are all allowed into it. That is the reason why the temple of Jagannatha is so popular worldwide.

The land of Odisha is very peculiar for the simple reason that even though many tribal communities form the major part of the population, but they almost have a common spiritual belief as a result of which the worships of Lord Jagannath as we all know now has been a evolving synthesis of many people, but with a common stream of thought flowing from pre-Vedic period as is evident from many Purans and comparative study of old civilization as well as archaeological excavation. The worship of Lord Jagannath in Odisha has led to evolution of distinct culture which is usually described as Jagannath culture. Jagannath culture believes in universality but not in sectarianism. Lord Jagannath as we know is the God of masses, but not of individuals with individual choice and thus naturally Jagannath culture has been observed as a mass culture. People of diverse faiths with their distinct social backgrounds have worshipped Lord Jagannath as their own. From the footprints of the ageless cultural heritage in India and abroad, we find that tribal (original inhabitant of Odisha), Dravidians, Aryans, orthodox Hindus, Jains, Buddhists, Sikhs, sects of Hinduism i.e. Vaishnavites, Saivites, Ganapatyas, Saurays, Shaktas have reposed their implicit faith in Lord Jagannath according to their beliefs. Culture of Lord Jagannath has been an elastic culture. Apart from influencing other culture it has, in course of time and passage of ups and



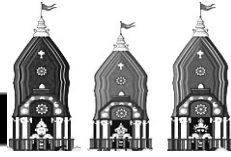
downs, social, political, financial status of the common people which comprise the modern day Odisha, has incorporated in its fold, the various cultures and their salient aspects of various faiths.

The culture of Lord Jagannath stands for religious tolerance, co-existence of all religions, communal harmony and international integration. Therefore, Lord Jagannath is worshipped by all irrespective of castes, creed, colour and community. As a result, the entire universe and inhabitants of universe are part and parcel of the concept of culture of Lord Jagannath.

Jagannath culture does not admit any distinction among the castes and communities. Jagannath culture aims at liberating poor and down-trodden for better life for which He is called Patitapaban and for which He gives darshan to all kinds of people of different faiths and religions sitting on the Chariot during the period of Rath Yatra in Puri.

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India is a sacred land of Gods. The concept of God is as old as man. Idol worship prevailed in post-Jain period after 6th century BC.

Dr. S.Radhakrishnan writes in his book entitled Hindu view of life, "Image worship which was a striving feature of the Dravidian faith was accepted by the Aryans. The ideals of vegetarianism and non-violence (ahimsa) also developed. The sacred scriptures



Shree Jagannath : Sovereign God of Cosmos

Parikhit Mishra

of Jains as much as that of Vedas". The Jagannath philosophy is non-violent by its food offering which is purely vegetarian. But the Lord takes extreme stand when his devotees are under threat.

Utkal is an inalienable part of India. Purusottam Kshetra is a holy place along Mahodadhi (sea), the dwelling place of Lord Vishnu over the ages. It is also holy place of incarnation of Gods. This place is also known as Shrikshetra, Bhaumakshetra, Dibyakshetra, Dasabatara Kshetra, Patitapaban Kshetra etc. It is also called Bhuswarga or heaven on earth. In

other words it is a glorious land, everything available aplenty, a joyous place.

Nilagiri (Blue hill) was the dwelling place of Lord Nilamadhav. He was worshipped in a grotto. Lord Nrusingha was also worshipped not far off on a root of a tree, known as Kalpabata spread over two miles area. One who takes shelter under the Kalpabata tree is exonerated from Brahmahatya guilt or sin of killing of Brahman, it is maintained in Skanda Puran.

Here the earth, air and water are sacrosanct. Purusottam Kshetra is a chosen place



of God. He also chose where to take bath and take food and take rest. The Lord takes bath at Badrinath, in cool water of Gangotri. He is dressed lovingly by mother Yosoda at Dwaraka. He takes his food (56 items of delicacies) at Purusottam Kshetra. The Lord takes rest at Rameswar.

The Vedas have hymns to appease Gods. Max Muller, the German erudite and Indologist writes in “The six system of Indian Philosophy on Nasadiya Hymn, thus:

1. There was then neither what is nor what is not; there was no sky, nor the heaven which is beyond. What covered ? Where was it ? And whose shelter ? Was the water the deep abyss in which it lay ?

“There was no death hence was there nothing immortal. There was no light (distinction) between day and night. That one breathed by itself without breath, other than it there has been nothing.

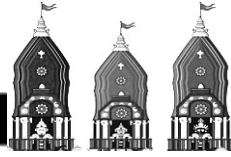
Under Prajapati, Brahman Atman and on creation it is stated,” We also read that in the beginning there was water over which Prajapati breathed as wind and produced the earth, or that the waters themselves produced a golden egg from whence arose Prajapati, the creator of gods and men.”

Again on religious status in India in the beginning it was said, “A belief in that Prajapati, as a personal God, was the beginning of monotheistic religion in India, while the recognition of Brahman and Atman as one constitutes the foundation of all the monistic philosophy of that country.

The Jagannath cult is all embracing, generous and tolerant. It pardons the die-hard criminals. The legend is replete with such stories. Kansa, Ravan and demons terrorized and killed innocent men and women who sided with godheads. In modern world the Jagannath cult is more relevant. No man is born atheist or dies so. In pain or distress he seeks relief and calls out, “Oh God ! Help me.” Tyrants, despots, dictators and autocrats seek divine help as age and disease weaken them. The oppressors commit suicide distressed as contrition. Man; however powerful he must know that he is born without his consent must go (leave) without his knowledge. Glory and victory belong to God.

The scriptures and legends enumerate that Jiva strives to merge in Parama and Atma strives to unite with Paramatma. The bond is inseparable. Lord Krishna advises the faithful to be loyal and surrender to him: Engage your mind always in thinking of me, become my devotee, offer obeisances to me and worship me. Being complete absorbed in me, surely you will come to me. (Gita)

Skanda Puran(Utkal Khanda) and Purusottama Mahatmya are replete with description of revelation of the Jagannath quartet in daru (wood). Puranas were composed around 1300AC, but the cult is much older. The Jagannath philosophy and tradition is unique. The icons are renewed periodically, but the Brahma Padartha(matter) remains unchanged which are neither sensed by human hands nor seen by human eyes. Thus, it is imperceptible. Change or renewal of the idols is called Navakalebar. The foods offered to the deities are shared by all devotees indiscriminately. In all 56 types of food offered to the deities. The Lord is a connoisseur of delicacies.



In Jagannath Revisited it is said, "The People of Orissa in particular, and the devotees of Lord Jagannath in general on the all-India level, repose strong faith and very much take it to their heart that what is essential in the Jagannath cult in the nature and quality of treatment of the trio. For the people, the uniqueness of the cult and its tradition lies more in embracing the deities as their own than in distancing themselves from (the triad), the way other gods and goddesses of the Hindu pantheon are usually held and treated."

It is stated that there is no hard and fast dress code to avail darshan of the Lord. No fasting, no ablution, no veg diet. It's all optional. A genuine devotee is discipline in word and deed. The believer maintains purity of body and soul for a fair darshan.

Darshan of Lord, it is believed, takes away sin. And a darshan of the Lord on the chariot exempts the onlooker from rebirth. The Jagannath philosophy is utilitarian and democratic causing maximum good to maximum people.

Once Lord Brahma prays Lord Vishnu for the ultimate good of the creatures. Lord Vishnu admires Nilamadhav of Nilagiri (Blue hill) of Purusottam Kshetra. The prognostication was that the brilliant and dazzling idol of Nilamadhav would disappear as king Indradyumna of Malav (Malwa) state, and capital city of Avanti would install wood images. Lord Brahma descended to witness for himself the kalpabata. He saw Rohini Kunda (tub) where a crow fell and transformed into a four armed Vishnu figure and flew to heaven.

Rapidly events took place before the revelation of Jagannath quartet. A Jatadhari Brahmin appeared in the royal court of King

Indradyumna. The king was fifth generation of Lord Brahma and a staunch devotee of Lord Vishnu. The Jatadhari told the king very highly about the Purusottam Kshetra, Nilagiri and Lord Nilamadhav, who was worshipped by gods in the night with exotic fruits eatable and aromatic flowers. The king was excited and overjoyed. He deputed forth-with Vidyapati on a fact-finding-mission. Vidyapati reaches Purusottam Kshetra, befriends sabar chieftain Viswavasv and achieves darshan of Lord Nila Madhav. Vidyapati returns to Avanti, briefs out about his successful mission. The king sets out for Purusottam Kshetra with his large entourage guided by Debarshi Narad. On their long way they worshipped deities of renown like Lord Lingaraj and Lord Ananta Basudev. But the king was crest-fallen when news was broken that Nilamadhav had disappeared in a sandstorm. The king executed 1000 aswamedha Yajna on the advice of Narad. They spotted Mahadaru in Mahodadhi shore and brought it to a podium in a grand procession. Both Narad and the king were in the lead. King Indradyumna was particularly ordered in dream or guided in voice of the air.

But the Maharanas could not make a dent of the Mahadaru. It was frustrating. At long last a Bruddha Bardhaki (himself Lord Vishnu) appeared from nowhere and carved sacred idols in closed door in 15 days. He had no trace as the door was opened. He built four images: Lord Balavadra, Lord Jagannath, Devi Subhadra and Sudarshan. Some scriptures have added 3 more images: Sridevi, Bhudevi and Madanmohan. Man must shed insanity of power and pelf and take refuge under the mightiest arms of Lord Jagannath to save earth and himself.



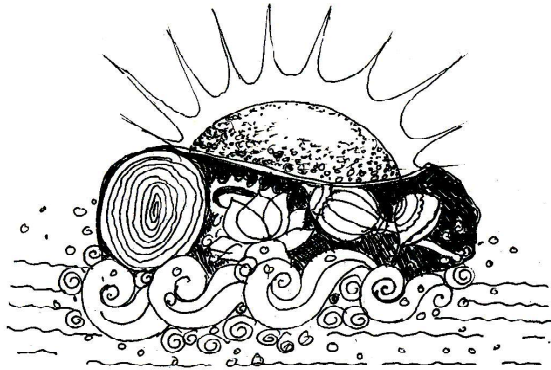
Shree Jagannath is Brahma. He is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent God. He is Parameswar (Param Iswar) Supreme Lord. As all rivers strive to merge in ocean all our prayer, worship and rituals performed before smaller gods in reality reach Narayan (Lord Jagannath). He is supreme God. 'Eka Brahma Dwitiya nasti' (God is one and second to none). Glory and pride belong to him.

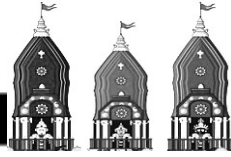
Jay Jagannath.

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Cuttack-753010, Mob: 9438703082.





That afternoon, black clouds hovered over the sky, and it started raining. I was enjoying the beauty of the rain from my office windows. The droplets falling from the leaves resembled the droplets coming from the straws of our hut during my childhood. Although we are facing significant changes in the climate cycle now, when we were kids, rain meant Ratha Yatra, and rain meant my Lord Jagannath. Just like rain brings relief to the parched earth and nourishes it, Lord Jagannath brings peace and fulfillment to the hearts of his devotees during Ratha Yatra. It is believed that during this festival, the Lord showers his blessings

nature, as if the divine essence of my Lord could be found hidden in every tree, every blade of grass, and every drop of rain. After the rain stopped, I took a break from my work and went for a walk from the medicine department to Hoover Tower at Stanford University. Due to the rain, everything was wet - the roads, the trees, the cars, bikes, and even my eyes. I was completely lost in my thoughts. I saw some empty roads and imagined my father walking by my side and getting me those small earthen carts (ratha) and earthen idols of Lord Jagannath. I know, with modernization, these things are fading away, but



Finding My Lord in Nature and Science

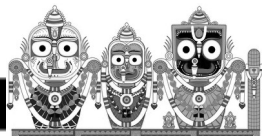
Dr. Neeladrisingha Das



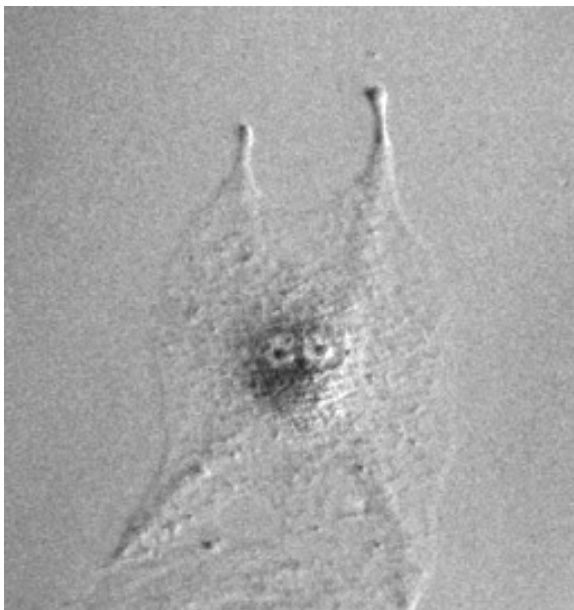
on his devotees just like rain, and those who are fortunate enough to witness the Lord's chariot passing by are said to be blessed with good fortune and spiritual fulfillment. Hence, I feel a very close connection with rain, Ratha Yatra, and my Lord. That spell of rain reminded me of the largest and most-attended event, i.e., Ratha Yatra. Now, I stay in California, where it hardly rains. But for some unknown reason, that spell of rain was special to me. It reminded me of my Lord and dragged me back to the memory lane. I started searching for my Lord there. I felt an overwhelming urge to explore every aspect of

the emotions I had with those dolls are as fresh as a crisp morning breeze. Lost in my thoughts, I suddenly found a few tears rolling down my cheeks. I felt alone and missed my Lord deeply. I couldn't go to my place; it's too far. I couldn't talk to my parents; it must be midnight there. I felt helpless and cried for my Lord.

When I was in school, my father called some woodcarvers to craft the deities of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra, Subhadra, and Sudarshana. I watched, transfixed, as they chiseled and shaped the logs of wood into the



likenesses of our beloved deities. From that day forward, I came to regard trees as divine entities in their own right, and I would often wrap my arms around the banyan tree in our backyard to feel the presence of my Lord. Filled with numerous emotions and feelings, I went very close to one of the Sequoia trees on our campus and hugged it. I even attempted to converse with it. I asked my Lord, what was my mistake? Why can't I see you? Why can't I see your Ratha Yatra? The tree listened silently, and after some time, a cool breeze waved its leaves. I felt refreshed, but still unanswered. After spending some time



A549 cells (human lung cancer cell) irradiated with 12 Gy radiation. Captured using an inverted microscope.

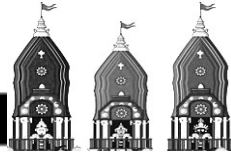
remembering my golden days of Ratha Yatra in Odisha, I started moving back to the medicine department. I felt very relaxed and refreshed after having a short hike and a good memory encounter. I had been working since morning, and that short break filled with memories of Ratha Yatra and my Lord gave me more strength to work.

As a cancer biologist, I spend most of my time looking through microscopes. That day, while imaging some irradiated cancer cells, I had a profound experience. A mix of blissful elation and tearful emotion welled up inside me as I saw my Lord's essence in the cells. I was surprised by his glimpse. However, I knew that if I shared this feeling, nobody would believe me. So, I captured an image of what I saw in the microscope and I'm sharing it here. That day was one of the most beautiful days of my life, and that moment was the most precious for me. In conclusion, while many other scientists may have viewed these cells with similar or even greater lucidity, it was through my lens that I caught a glimpse of my Lord's beauty, which filled my heart with felicity. For me, Lord Jagannath is not just a deity, but an emotion. He listens, talks, and shows up in his very own way.

Jay Jagannath.

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Puri, the Purusottam Kshetra or Shreekshetra is one among the four most sacred places (*Punya Dhama*) of Hinduism along with Dwarika, Badrinath and Rameswaram. Lord Jagannatha, who was not only Rastra Devata (State Deity) of the powerful Gajapati kings of Odisha but was also regarded as “the true king of the whole Odisha empire” (*Odisha rajya raja Sri Jagannatha*) and the people of Odisha. Not only the temple is holy, but the whole of its surroundings, the *Kshetra*, extending over five *kosas* or about sixteen kilometers has been extolled as holy in the Puranas.

the beautiful *Aruna Stambha*. The pillar is named so after the name of *Aruna*, the charioteer of the Sun God. The Sun Pillar is a monolithic shaft of chlorite with sixteen sides. It is 25 feet, and two inches in height, 2 feet in diameter, and 6 feet and 3.5 inches in circumference. It stands on an exquisitely carved pedestal (made of chlorite) of 7 feet 9 inches square and 6 feet high, and has a capital on the top 2.5 feet high, over which squats the praying Aruna. The capital is formed of two rings surmounted by a series of lotus petals. The measurements thus give a total height of 33 feet 8 inches from the ground to the top of the capital.



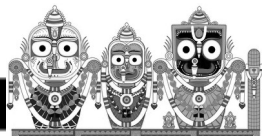
Baisi Pahacha : The Path to Salvation

Balabhadra Ghadai



The Temple of Lord Jagannath standing majestically on the *Bada Danda* or the Grand Road, is surrounded by two parallel lines of walls, built of laterite stone. The outer wall is provided with four gates on the four sides, that on the East being considered the most important. This is called *Simhadwara* or the Lion Gate. In front of the entrance to the eastern gateway there is





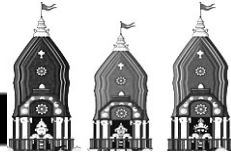
Besides the *Simha Dwara*, the other entrances of the temple complex are known as *Hasti Dwara* or the Elephant Gate, *Ashwa Dwara* or the Horse Gate and the *Vyaghra Dwara* or the Tiger Gate. The *Simha Dwara* is so named because two huge statues of crouching lions exist on either side of the entrance.

An image of Lord Jagannatha known as *Patita pavana*, which in Sanskrit means the “Redeemer of the fallen” is painted on the right side of the entrance. He is called Patitapabana due to the fact that the image was installed by Raja Rama Chandra Dev II (1728 A.D.) of the Khordha Gajapati House to enable him to make his daily obeisance to the Lord from outside as he could not be permitted to enter the Temple due to conversion to Islam under duress by Mahammad Taqi Khan, the Naib Nazim (Deputy Subedar) of Cuttack during the reign of Aurangzeb. It is pertinent to mention the historical fact that when King Ramachandra Dev II was the king of Khordha, Taqi Khana, a fanatic Muslim and the illegitimate son of Sujauddin Khan (Nazim of Bengal) was appointed as the Naib Nazim of Odisha. Taking the advantage of chaos and instability and internal dissention, Taqi Khan invaded the fort of Rathipur which was a strategic stronghold of the Raja of Khordha. Ramachandra Dev II met Taqi Khan with a view to establishing peace and harmony in Khordha territory but was imprisoned in the fort of Barabati by the intolerant Muslim administrator. While staying at Barabati fort as a prisoner he was won over by Rizia Bibi, the daughter of Sujauddin Khan and the sister of Mohammad Taqi Khan. Either due to love or compulsion of the political circumstances, Ramachandra Dev II married the Muslim princess and was converted to Islam. He also assumed

the Muslim name “Hafiz Kader Beg.” Though outwardly he became a Muslim, at heart he was still continuing to be an ardent devotee of Lord Jagannatha. Lord Jagannatha understood the feeling of heart of the king. He rushed from His *Ratna Simhasana* to Lion’s Gate to see his devotee (king). The *Sevayats* and others were surprised to see the flowers and ornaments of Lord that were fallen in a scattered manner on the way inside the temple. In a dream to *Bada-Panda* (Chief Priest), Lord expressed His unhappiness to the decision taken by the Pundits not to allow His devotee. After this incident, *Patita pavana* deity was installed at the Lion’s Gate of the temple to give His *darshan* to all non-Hindus and *patitas*.

From the *Simha Dwara* the *Baisi Pahacha* or twenty two flights of steps lead into the temple complex in an ascending order. After passing through the *Simha Dwara*, one has to go up these steps in order to get into the main temple for the *darshan* of the Trinity on the *Ratnavedi*. The width and length of the steps are not uniform. The width of the fifteen steps varies from 5 feet and 10.5 inches to 6 feet and 3 inches and the height is 6 inches to 7 inches. The size of the remaining 7 steps are smaller both in length and width. The steps are made of feldspars and khondalite. A famous Shiva Linga, named *Kashi Bishwanath* and the idols of Ramachandra, Nrusimha and Ganesh have been installed on the southern side of the *Baisi Pahacha*.

The history or rather mystery of these 22 steps has not been unveiled. However, these steps are highly revered by the devotees as it is believed that they possess spiritual animation. The names of *Baisi Pahacha* are:



(1) Tibra, (2) Kumudabati, (3) Manda, (4) Chhandobati, (5) Dayabati, (6) Ranjane, (7) Ratika, (8) Roudra, (9) Krodha, (10) Badrika, (11) Prasarini, (12) Bratee, (13) Marjani, (14) Khyati, (15) Rakta, (16) Sandipani, (17) Ajapani, (18) Madanti, (19) Rohini, (20) Ramya, (21) Ugra, (22) Khyobhini.

Though the exact time of its construction is not mentioned anywhere in historical or puranic texts, legends say that it was built by a king named Bhanudev. Legendary sources suggest that King Bhanudev was childless. As per the advice of the Rajguru he prayed to Lord Jameswar (Shiva) for a son. The Lord granted his wish, but the priests predicted that the new born prince would live for only 22 years. The king again prayed to Lord Jameswar, who ordered the king to construct twenty two steps on the entrance to the temple through the Lions Gate before reaching the main temple so as to get extended life of the baby. Thus the king constructed the Baisi Pahacha. Since the Baisi Pahacha was related to the long life, the devotees have a faith that rolling over the Baisi Pahacha, long life would be granted and untimely death could be prevented. It is found that the parents bring their children and make them slowly roll over the steps from the top to the bottom in expectation of spiritual bliss in as much as countless devotees have walked on the steps which are believed to be throbbing with spiritual animation.

It is interesting to note that the devotees while going up the steps, come across a black stone popularly known as *Yama Shila* which has been engraved into the middle of the third step. As per puranic view, the devotees must put their steps on this stone when they are entering the temple to get relief from *Yama danda* (punishment

from the God of death). But one must not step on this stone on the way back, since it takes away the merits of the darshan of lord Jagannath. The small rough stone on the seventh step is called *Pretashila* or *Pitrushila*. People who believe to liberate the souls of the deceased leave *Anna Mahaprasad* (holy rice of the temple that has been offered to Lord Jagannath) on it for feeding the ancestors.

Different religious interpretations are there to symbolize these sacred 22 steps and various holy activities are performed on these steps throughout the year. It is believed that during the car festival several gods and goddesses, demigods, other heavenly entities, the souls of the ancestors (near pitrushila), *Chitrakupta* (Minister of Yama Raj) and *Yamadootas* (near Yamashila) descend upon these steps to witness the *pahandi* (procession of deities during the Ratha Yatra) of Lord Jagannath. Annual *pinda dana* (a special ritual in which food is offered to the ancestors) is performed on both sides of these 22 steps. The ancestral souls are believed to be satiated by it. Madana Mohan, the representative deity of Lord Jagannath offers *pinda dana* (shraddha or oblation) on these steps to His ancestors i.e., Nanda and Yosada, Devaki and Vasudeva and Kaushalya and Dasaratha on Chaturdashi tithi of the dark fortnight in the month of Margashira. He also offers *pinda dana* on this Baisi Pahacha to king Indradyumna and queen Gundicha since they were childless. On the day of Deepavali, people burn *kaunria kathi* (a bundle of jute/light sticks) and show it upwards to illuminate the path of the ancestral souls. This ritual is called *badabadia daka* (elders call).

Some religious scholars are of opinion that a devotee before reaching the sanctum sanctorum for the darshan of the Trinity, he has to cross over



the *Ashta Baikuntha*, viz, (1) *Shree Baikuntha*, (2) *Kaibalya Baikuntha*, (3) *Karanannaba Baikuntha*, (4) *Sesasai Baikuntha*, (5) *Swetadwipa Baikuntha*, (6) *Parobyoma Baikuntha*, (7) *Garbhodaka Baikuntha* and (8) *Kailasha Baikuntha* for the first eight steps. The rest fourteen steps relate to fourteen *bhubanas* which are again divided into two parts, *martya* and *patala*. The *martya bhubanas* are *Bhuh*, *Bhubah*, *Swah*, *Mahas*, *Janah*, *Tapah* and *Satya* whereas *patala bhubanas* consist of *Atala*, *Sutala*, *Bitala*, *Talatala*, *Mahitala*, *Rasatala* and *Patala*.

The Jains too have many things in common in their spiritual practice with the cult of Lord Jagannath. They have an unflinching belief that the twenty two steps of Puri temple represent twenty two *Tirthankaras* out of twenty four of their religion. The other two *Tirthankaras* are represented through the Stone Citadel (*Ratnavedi*) of the temple and the Grand Road (*Bada Danda*) of Purusottam Kshetra. When a Jain devotee enters the temple and starts climbing the 22 steps, he touches each stone in deep

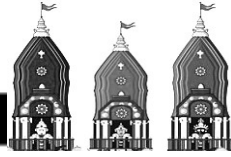
reverence and then touches his head as a mark of adoration to the *Tirthankaras* of his religion.

Some other scholars state that a devotee has to give up twenty two *prakruti* before getting the darshan of Lord Jagannath. These *Prakrutis* are five *Karmendriya* (mouth, hands, feet, genitals and rectum) and five *Gyanendriya* (ear, skin, eye, tongue and nose) with *Panchamana* i.e. *mana*, *amana*, *bimana*, *kumana* and *sumana* and seven *Bikaras* which are *kama* (lust), *krodha* (anger), *moha* (emotions), *lova* (greed), *ahankara* (pride), *irsha* (jealousy) and *ghruna* (hatred). So the scholars have named it 'the steps of self-control.'

There is no denying the fact that the Baisi Pahacha has long since been considered a sacred part of Sri Jagannatha temple and devotees are believed to experience a sense of fulfillment after putting a fleck of dust from the surface of these 22 steps on their foreheads. Such are the ineffable glories of the Baisi Pahacha.

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The French ship carrying passengers, a big bell and some amount of jewels was sailing through the blue watermass of Bay of Bengal to reach its destination at Pondicherry. It stopped for some time at Chandipur Port, then resumed its journey. Apart from its employees, there were businessmen, Priests and labourers in the ship.

In one compartment of the ship, were kept a huge bell and some jewels under the custody of captain Albaque Beatow to be delivered to the church in Pondicherry.

It was a Sunny morning and the atmosphere was quite pleasant. The mate of the

Albaque Baeto. Through telescope, Beatow observed it to be a Timingila rushing fast towards the ship. He feared, it might not be very late for the creature to swallow the ship; His fear doubled when he observed that the fierce creature was followed by a violent whirlwind coming towards the ship. Captain Beatow had reputation in the field of captaincy. By dint of his experience and efficiency he had saved himself from different adverse situations in the Sea. But this horrific scene trembled his heart. As if the Timingila in order to save itself from the whirlwind was rushing towards the ship. If at all the ship got saved from the face

Captain Albaque Beatow and Lord Jagannath

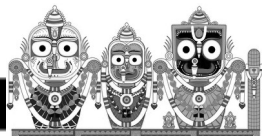
Dr. Sarat Chandra Biswal

ship stood on the deck and enjoyed the beauty by moving the telescope over the vast watermass. Suddenly his eyes got fixed at a particular place, "Oh ! what a gigantic creature coming fast towards the ship !" He got perplexed to see such colossal body of the creature. He had never seen such a creature during his several sea voyages in the past. He thought it to be a whale, but still he was doubtful as it was a much bigger creature. He thought its cave-like large mouth might swallow the ship easily or its strong tail might smash the ship into pieces.

Mate Started trembling to see the creature. In a shaking voice the called out Captain

of the Timingila, then also it might not escape from the disaster of whirlwind. He alongwith the mate of the ship stood on the deck and observed the fierce scene of imminent death approaching them.

Captain Beatow ordered to ring the warning bell to make the passengers alert. As soon as the warning bell rang the passenger got frightened and rushed to the deck. Captain informed them about the imminent danger and as the last resort advised them to meditate on their favourite gods. Passengers visualized as if the god of death was standing before them. They trembled in fear without uttering a single word. They



encircled the captain and looked at him with tearful eyes. Without finding any way captain started moving from one end of the deck to the other.

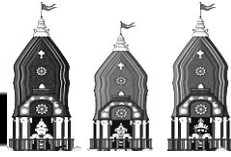
After a shortwhile the Captain heard shrieking sounds from the passengers. They were getting prepared to attack the creature with weapons like spears etc. The attempt of the passengers appeared futile to the Captain as the creature was of enormous size to swallow the ship.

The eyes of the captain again fell on that fierce creature Timingila. In the faint day light of the Cloudy sky its eyes appeared like two burning fire balls radiating fire particles. How terrible the eyes of the creature were ? The horrible scene trembled the heart of the captain. He returned back to the ship.

Being perplexed all the passengers stood on the deck, waiting for the inevitable death.

At this time one incident attracted the attention of the Captain. A Passenger sitting in one corner of the ship was murmuring something in low voice with his eyes fixed on a portrait placed in front of him.

Captain got astonished to see the person sitting unperturbed. “Is he not hearing the cry of the terrified people facing imminent death ?” He went to him to know the fact. The man did not distract his attention from the portrait even for a moment. Curious captain bent down and looked at the portrait minutely. “What a wonderful Portrait” ! Suddenly as if his eyes got closed. It was a hand-made portrait, in which three images were sitting closed to each other. The colour of



the left image was white, the middle was of yellow colour and right one with black colour. "How terrible, the black image was !" He exclaimed. Its eyes were looking more dreadful than that of the burning eyes of the creature. "Is the man praying the god of death for watery grave of this ship."

The Captain cried out. "What are you doing ?"

The man diverted his attention and looked at the Captain. The Captain saw two lines of tears had rolled down his cheeks.

The man with quavering voice said to Captain, "I am making an humble Prayer to Lord Jagannath for saving us from this great disaster !"

"Jagannath ! Who is He ? Where is his abode ?" Captain asked with utter astonishment. The man replied "Captain, He is God of my country. Sri Kshetra is his holy abode ! Still his power spreads everywhere in the world !"

Captain asked, "How can He save us from this danger ? Can he be able to kill the gigantic Timingila ? Will he be able to destroy the strength of the whirlwind ?"

The man smiled and answered in a low but emphatic voice, "Captain, there is nothing impossible on the part of Lord Jagannath; Cannot, the God, who is the creator of the whole universe, save us from this little danger. Captain, I know it for certain, Lord Jagannath is a living God and I have deep faith in Him. He will save us from this danger."

Captain was surprised to see the mental strength of the man. His hands got folded spontaneously as he beheld the hypnotic black

image. He looked at the Portrait and prayed, "Oh Lord ! if you save us from the face of this terrible danger, I will take shelter at your feet by surrendering you the bell alongwith all the jewels meant for the church of Pondicherry."

The commotion of the passengers increased a lot as the Timingila become closer to the Ship. The Captain rushed on to the deck. He observed the two eyes of the creature were burning like two balls of fire as before. Within a minute or two it would swallow the ship and satisfy the hunger. The portrait of Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra flashed before the eyes of the captain. Mentally he offered sincere prayer to Jagannath to save them from the danger.

The miracle happened. The movement of the Timingila suddenly got stopped. His astonishment knew no bounds when he observed that the creature had already been motionless at a place without any forward movement. Again he observed unlike the past the eyes burning like fire balls had lost its radiance. Despite its attempts it was unable to see forward. It seemed as if any unseen power had snatched away its power of vision and movement or it had been frightened by any scene, more dreadful than itself.

The gigantic Timingila remained stable at a place for sometime and changed its direction by diverting its attention from the ship. It moved swiftly to another direction in the sea as if to save its life from any danger.

Captain Beatow heaved a sigh of relief. Now he centered his attention on the distant horrible whirlwind. He observed, the whirlwind had also changed its course. Without approaching the ship, it was following the Timingila as if to take revenge upon it. Seeing all these happenings,



Captain Beatow felt contented as well as astonished.

The dreadful situation was no more. Captain declared in loud voice that the ship was free from danger. The joy of the Passengers knew no bounds.

The Captain slowly entered in to ship where the devotee of Lord Jagannath had been sitting meditatively. Out of joy he embraced and shook hands with him. Tears of joy rolled down his cheeks. He looked at the portrait and said, "Oh Lord Jagannath, you are the Supreme Being and infinite ! It is indescribable, that you have saved us from the great disaster. There is nothing that I can give you. Still I must keep up my promise. I will present at your lotus feet all the materials meant for the church of Pandicherry. I will have your holy vision to ennoble my life."

The voyage of the ship changed its course and was directed towards Sri Kshetra, Puri.

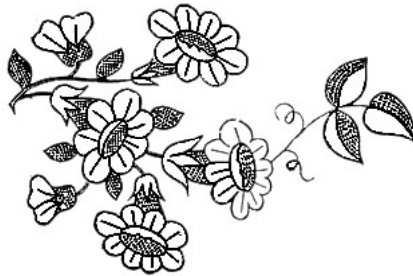
Captain Beatow had the holy vision of Lord Jagannath. Out of deep gratitude he presented all the jewels and the huge bell at the lotus feet of Lord Jagannath and returned back to Pondicherry.

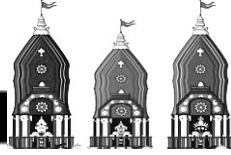
The huge bell presented by Captain Beatow has been preserved in Niladri Vihar inside the Jagannath temple for display of the devotees.

Lord Jagannath, the omnipotent and omniscient Being shower his blessings and redeems the distressed, fallen and sinners who meditate on him with sincerity of heart and soul.

Jay Jagannath.

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Hanuman, the devotee God born in Tretaya Hyugo from the parents Anjana and Keshari. Just after the birth, the baby ran to eat the rising Sun in the eastern sky which looks like an orange-colored fruit. Looking at this situation, Devraj Indra, the king of swarga (the Heaven) cautioned the baby not to eat the Sun in any manner as Sun is the illuminating and energizing God of the Universe. Without Sun the Earth will be no more. Anjaneya, the son of Anjana didn't care for the caution given by Indra and continued his attack on the very soft looking Sun.



Hanuman and His Services to Lord Jagannath

*Dr. Prafulla Chandra Mohanty
Pradeep Kumar Mohanty*

Indra deva, without getting any alternative to restrain the baby from the Sun, at last thrown his weapon Bajra (a weapon made of bones of Rishi Dadhichi). By this, the facial bones of the baby were damaged, and the baby fell from the sky on the earth and remained senseless. The parents, the Siva, and the God of Air all were furious about the death of the baby and so the God of Air started to stop the blowing of the breeze. It invites a dangerous situation and life risk to all. All Gods and Goddesses assembled with Brahma and prayed Lord Vishnu for a

positive solution to save the Universe. At the end, the baby was blessed by all to alive and to do some good deeds for the universe. But the face of the baby was affected by the application of Bajra and so the upper jaw (face bone) was down pressed. Because of this damaged Hanuhada, the bone of the face, the baby looks ugly a little and so everyone started calling him as Hanuman. Since then, the baby was very familiar in the name of Hanuman. In Hindu mythology, Hanuman has twelve names in Sanskrit. They are like Hanuman, Rameshta, Adhi Karman,



Anjanisuta, Falguni Sakha, Sitasoka Binasaka, Bayu putra, Pingaksha, Lakshman pranadata, Mahabali, Amit Bikram and Dashgriba Darpa. The names elaborate the conduct, character and qualities of the great devotee Hanuman.

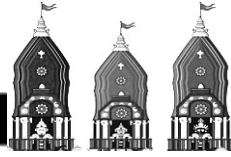
Hanuman was the son of Punjikastala a cursed Apsara (a very beautiful dancer of heaven), was named as Anjan in her next birth and hence he is also named as Anjana Suta or Anjeneya in Sanskrit, his father was Keshari hence Hanuman has another name like Keshari Nandan. Similarly, Hanuman was named as Rudra Avatar (son of Rudra, the Siva), and Pawan Suta (son of Air God), etc. Hanuman though a devotee God of Tretaya still lives in the minds and hearts of everyone for his selfless deeds only to ensure Dharma. He helped God Ram in searching for Sita Devi and protecting from the clutches of the demon Ravana and establishing Ramrajya based on Dharma and total justice. Hanuman is also called as Chiranjeevi (who lives forever or the person who never dies at all). As per Hindu mythology, there are seven such persons like Aswathama, Bali, Byasadev, Hanuman, Bibhisan, Kripacharya, and Parsuram. Hanuman is a Brahmachari but epics says that he had a son named Makardhwaja. The birth story of Makardhwaja is based not on sperm but on a drop of sweat, that fell on the sea while taking a bath. This focuses on our modern science which researches till to acquire the scientific knowledge on the fact, which is written in Ramayan, a Hindu Epic. While writing on Bhakta (devotee) God Hanuman a lot of scientific facts are there to narrate and realize but we are to pinpoint the Hanuman temples and their services at Shree Jagannath Dham, Puri.

Hanuman Temples of Puri:

It is seen that there are number of Hanuman temples situated in and outside Puri. They can be classified as the Hanuman temples inside the Jagannath temple premises and others



are at outside the temple compound. The Jagannath temple has four gates. They are like eastern gate i.e the Singha dwar (Lions Gate), southern gate i.e the Ashwa dwar (Horse Gate), western gate Vyaghra dwara (Tiger Gate) and towards north i.e Hasti Dwar, (Elephant Gate). Hanuman renders lot of services during different rituals of Lord Jagannath temple. The most important vital duty of Shree Hanuman is to guard the whole temple. So, there are four Hanuman temples, one in each direction. On the eastern side, Singhadwar has Phate Hanuman temple, in the West gate, Veer Hanuman is in charge. Similarly, the Tapaswi Hanuman is looking after



the Northern entrance of Jagannath temple, and the south side gate is incharged by Barabhai Hanuman. In the Neelamani purana (epic), it is stated that the God Jagannath blessed and fulfilled the desire of Hanuman to stay at Shreekshetra all the time and render the required services as needed. Lord Jagannatha categorically instructed his first devotee to look after the temple and the well-being of other devotees. The pilgrims or devotees who are coming to see Lord Jagannath and other deities are advised to see first Hanuman and then proceed further. Along with the four guarding Hanuman, there are also other holy Hanuman idols in the temple to worship. They are like Makardhwaja Hanuman, Sudunga Hanuman, Kanpata Hanuman, Bedi (chained) Hanuman, Siddhi Hanuman, Udanta (flying) Hanuman and Siruli Mahaveer Hanuman, etc. The Makardhwaja Hanuman temple is situated nearer to Puri. The idol holds a sword in one hand and the other hand carries a Vijaya Ketan (a victory flag). The legend recites that Kamadeva (the God of desires/sex) once came to enter Puri, But Makardhwaja Hanuman restrained Kamdev to enter the temple. A war was fought in between Hanuman and Kamadev but Hanuman won the war. It says symbolically that to attain moksha, the desires are to be destroyed and it can be reached by worshipping Hanuman, the God of Brahmacharya. A similar Hanuman temple is there in the garden of Jagannath Ballahva upavan (garden) called as Sudung (a secret Underground way) Hanuman. Hanuman is to guard the entrance i. e., the Sudung.



Even if the almighty needed to be shifted by devotees, they need to take permission from the hanuman. At the time of Chandan jatra (festival celebration), Lord Jagannatha gets permission from Sudung Hanuman. It says that the work or duty is more powerful than God and it applies to all, even to God.

The other important Hanuman is Kanpata Hanuman or the Sabda bhedi Hanuman. As per the name itself, Hanuman controls sound. If you want to hear a very slow sound, then you should

concentrate deeply to hear the sound. That is the situation which is called 'kana pateiba' in Odia language, The same duty was given to Hanuman to control the roaring sound of the sea and for that, the Hanuman is always hearing the sound level of the sea and is busy to control it. This brings an undisturbed, peaceful, soundless environment for meditation and concentration. Kanpata Hanuman idol is not less than a height of 18 feet high which comes to bara hata (12 hands

in measurement), i. e. one hand is equal to 18 inches. At the sea coast, in the Chakratirtha area, there is another Hanuman Temple known as Bedi Hanuman which means the Hanuman idol worshipped here is tied up with a Bedi (A big rope). The legend runs that there was an ashram of Rishi Angirasha near the coast. Most of the times the ashram was washed away by the coastal tides. Angirasha was a powerful Rishi of his time. He narrated the disturbances made by the sea which creates problems in his peaceful meditation

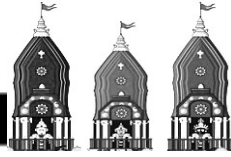


and so requested Lord Jagannath for a solution. Lord Jagannath, then directed Hanuman to guard the sea's invasion to Angirasha's Ashram. Hanuman went to Chakratirtha and stand there to guard against sea encroachment and warn the sea God to stay within the limit. Things run peacefully but when Hanuman went to see Lord Jagannath, in his absence the sea waves again started disturbing. The fact was again reported to the Almighty. Lord Jagannath ordered and supplied a big rope (Chain) to tie up Hanuman. So that Hanuman can remain in the place to guard sea. With the order, Angirasha tied up Hanuman. Hanuman performed his given responsibilities of guarding the sea waves. Hanuman, as we know, is a very energetic one he can break all hurdles that comes to him. But he is controlled by his words, in the name of his Lord Sri Ram or Sri Jagannath. Since then, the Hanuman was named as Bedi Hanuman or tied-up Hanuman or in English the Chained Hanuman. Another Hanuman temple, named Siddha Hanuman is worshipped at Puri near Indradyumna puskarini (tank). As per the descriptions given in Indra Nilamani Puran (the epic), it is mentioned that King Indradyumna first of all worshipped Bhakta Hanuman and by His grace and support, he was able to build such a huge Sri Mandir in the sea-coast on the NeelaSaila (blue mountain). Worshipping of the Hanuman will give satisfaction and fulfill the desires of the devotees. So, this Hanuman is known as Siddhi Hanuman from the times immemorial.



It is also believed that the workers who worked in the construction of Jagannath Temple are still inside this Indradyumna sarobara (the pious tank) in the form of turtles. The significance is that on carrying stones, etc. the backside of the so-called labourers became solid like stone and of no sense as of a turtle. Another Hanuman Temple is also there in the name of Udanta Hanuman towards the southern side of Srimandir.

It was constructed by king Gajapati Pratap Rudra Deva in the sixteenth-century A.D. The available fact says that in the 16th century, the Neel-Chakra of Jagannath temple was bent under the pressure of severe cyclonic storms. Later all the trials have been made to bring it to its normal form, but none succeeded. The king was in agony and so prayed to Sri Jagannatha. In the morning, a devotee of Sri Hanuman named Santha Das came and advised Gajapati to pray and surrender to lord Hanuman for the cause. Accordingly, King Pratap Rudra worshipped the Hanuman and prayed to bring the damaged NilaChakra to the original form. A surprise happened on next day morning that a monkey came perhaps on flying to the top of Srimandir and set the Neel Chakra (Blue Wheel) into its original form. After completion of the work the Godly monkey disappeared on a single jump fled into the southern sky. Since then, the Gajapati king constructed a temple dedicated to the name of the so-called Udanta (flying) Hanuman and started worshipping. In this context, the work of Hanuman was memorized, how he started flying



from the top of the legendary Mahendra Mountain from our South Odisha towards Sri Lanka for searching Sita Devi in Tretaya yuga, the era of Ramayana.

The name and fame of lord Hanuman will remain incomplete if we will not know about Siruli Hanuman. Siruli Hanuman temple is at the entrance road to Puri. The temple is at the western end of the village Siruli measuring about 12 km from the roadside village Chandanapur. It is towards the northeast corner and at 33 km from the Puri city. The huge image of 10 feet Hight of lord Hanuman is said to be Swayambhu (came out of bursting the soil automatically). It is made of a single makadasha stone. The temple was built in the 6th century AD by the king Chola Gang Deva. Some other historians say that it was from the 12th century A.D. Here the Sriuli Hanuman idol looks to the Neel Chakra (the Blue wheel) by his left eye through a hole made in the wall. Similarly, the right eye throws a vision toward Sri Lanka, the land of the late demon Ravana. Th Siruli Hanuman idol holds the mountain Gandhamardan in his right hand and in the left hand carries a katuri (a cutter/ dagger) and bears a very beautiful garland of Jewels (Baijayanti mala) in the neck.

Earlier the Hanuman was in the Jagannath temple. In the night the snoring sound of the Hanuman disturbed the comfortable sleeping of Goddess Sri Laxmi. So, she expressed her discomfort with the snoring sound of Hanuman

to Lord Jagannath. Goddess Sri Laxmi requested Lord Jagannath to shift Hanuman. Accordingly, Sri Jagannath directed Hanuman to shift a little more distance. Since then, Hanuman left the



temple and shifted two and half steps towards northwest. This two-and-a-half steps of Hanuman now is about 30 km distance. The tail of Siruli Hanuman was discovered by a farmer in a blooded condition while ploughing. The farmer lost his sense but later, constructed a temple with the co-operation of villagers at 7 km from the village Siruli. Along with this Hanuman temple, some more Hanuman idols are there

which are worshipped by the panchakoshi (within a radius of 10 miles from the Main Jagannath Temple of Puri). Hanuman is always ready to protect Dharma, the religion of human beings, and do justice for all the time. He is Chiranjeevi (alive forever) and can come anywhere he likes and do any sort of activity for the establishment of Ramarajya, the universe of devotion, love, affection, justice, and peace at large.

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Pradeep Kumar Mohanty, Senior Software Engineer, At: Mantridi, Dist – Ganjam, now residing at Flat No: C-207, Prakruthi Meadows, Second Floor, Amruthahalli Main Rd, Kashi Nagar, Byatarayanapura, Bangalore-560092, Mob : 9003261703.





There are a number of servitors employed in the temple of Lord Jagannath for the services of the Trinity and the Consortia established in the premises of great temple complex. These servitors have been assigned specific duties which are clear cut and well defined so as not to have any lacking or overlapping. Out of these servitors, one is called Talicha Mohapatra, by designation, who is assigned a specific but very important duty towards the Trinity over the Ratna Singhasan. This particular duty assigned as a pride of privilege of the family of Talicha Mohapatra and enjoyed by the family from generation to generation. The family has been established by the authority near the temple in view of this importance of the duty

The Legend goes like this :

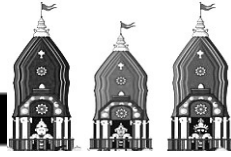
There is a particular service for the Trinity performed by the servitor Talicha Mohapatra which is very important. His duty starts early in the morning and ends with PAHUDA (closing of temple). Long long ago there was a Talicha Mohapatra whose name was Jagabandhu. Jagabandhu was in service of Trinity during the period of the king , Prataprudra Dev. Jagabandhu was a very devoted servitor whose duty started in the morning which consisted of taking out the attires of last night of the Trinity and to redress them with fresh ones and decorate as prescribed for the particular TITHI (Lunar day). Jagabandhu

The Legend of Talicha Mohapatra, A Servitor of Lord Jagannath

Dr. Pramoda Chandra Pattanayak

towards the Trinity which starts from the morning till the PAHUDA, the last rite of the temple. The present episode which is described below happened long back during the rulings of Prataprudra Dev, Maharaja of Puri. Before describing the episode which the readers may be interested to know that I have been contributing such lesser known episodes to the special issue of Ratha Jatra (Car Festival) of ODISHA REVIEW which is published in commemoration of the world famous function of the Trinity. I used to spread such episodes, though less known, but carries great importance on the God - Devotee relationship. My aim is that when it is put to English language it gets wings to fly throughout the world.

besides being a devoted servitor had gathered vast knowledge on various aspects of Veda, Vedanta, Gita, Bhagabat and on different puranic and religious literature. Again he was most sincere towards his duty to the Trinity to which he used to give priority. In spite of possessing so many virtues, Jagabandhu was leading an ordinary life like other colleagues and associates. Since his duty towards the Trinity starts in the morning and ends with the last rite i.e PAHUDA the entire day he had to perform his duty for intermittent changes of attires of the Trinity and redress with prescribed clothes and to put different ornaments as required for the particular TITHI and application of sandal wood paste, illumination of the camphor fire etc.



Then starts the Garlanding of the Trinity. All these rituals were performed by Jagabandhu with utmost sincerity and he used to be completely engrossed physically and mentally. As regards the chores of his domestic affair, it was left to the family members. When a little time used to be available, Jagabandhu spent it in reciting devotional songs and preaching of religious subject matters. But he never failed to devote time in the service of the Trinity, whatsoever. Thus he enjoyed himself in his duty from the morning till the PAHUDA and was happiest person of the mortal world.

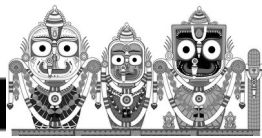
One day The Maharaja of Puri, Prataprudra Dev, came to the temple for the Darshan of Lord Jagannath along with his concert of soldiers, musical party and other followers. Incidentally Talicha Mohapatra, Jagabandhu had just left for his home after the chores of the usual service for the Trinity. Some sevayat immediately sent for him in order to attend The Maharaja, Prataprudra Dev. On getting the news of Maharaja's arrival, Jagabandhu rusher the temple and was ready at the Ratnasinghasana to attend the Darshan of the king. But to his surprise all the flowers he adorned on the idol of Lord Jagannath in the morning had in the state of dissolution. As such Jagabandhu was puzzled and anticipated danger if he would fail to offer a flower in fresh condition from the head of Lord Jagannath, which Prataprudra Dev used to get.

The king, as usual, had a Darshan of the Trinity and customarily expected a flower from the head of Lord Jagannath. In order to save himself from the impending danger of anger of the king, Jagabandhu immediately and stealthily took out the flower from his own head which was very fresh and offered to the king along with the Prasad. On receipt of the flower and Prasad from Talicha Mohapatra, the king returned to his palace followed by accompaniment, after his Darshan of the Trinity.

On arrival at the palace, the King as usual had the Prasad along with the flower which he had received from the head of Lord Jagannath through the Talicha Mohapatra. To his surprise, the King noticed a hair on the flower while he was going to have the Prasad. He was puzzled. How can a hair come to the flower coming from the head of Lord Jagannath! It must have been used by Talicha Mohapatra himself the king thought. Being frowned, he immediately sent four sentries to summon Talicha Mohapatra to the palace. The sentries in obedience to the order of the King rushed to the temple and brought him and like a detenu produced before the king. Jagabandhu had already scented the danger of the anger of the King.

The King asked Jagabandhu about the hair on the flower given to him from the head of Lord Jagannath. Had the idol grown hairs on the head ? He wanted an explanation immediately, lest to face the punishment which would be sever and may be death in want of a satisfactory answer. Jagabandhu scented the punishment of death was sure and prayed Lord Jagannath for rescue. A flash of idea came to his mind to save himself from the danger which was knocking at the door and gathering courage told a lie! "Sir ! hairs have been found on the head of the idol of Lord Jagannath. Perhaps the king had failed to notice during his Darshan." The king, on hearing such an absurd and unusual statement from Talicha Mohapatra asked him whether he is in a state of sound mind and if so can he show it ? If not, he is sure to get capital punishment which may be a death penalty. Jagabandhu gathering courage in the name of Lord Jagannath, agreed to show it, in order to save himself from the present situation.

Jagabandhu was let off from the palace of the king who proceeded from there to the temple to attend the rest duty of the day towards the Trinity. After completing the last rites of the Trinity, Jagabandhu prostrated before the idols



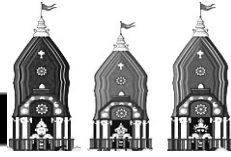
and prayed to Lord Jagannath submitting his folly and wanted for the punishment, whatsoever, even if it is penalty of death. Jagabandhu submitted that he had lied on only to save from that situation without any other intention. With this prayer Jagabandhu left the temple with a heavy heart of the repentance and went to his home. On the way Jagabandhu collected some poison and kept ready to have it the next morning. He went to sleep escaping his supper. While he was going to sleep Jagabandhu was repenting for his folly and praying Lord Jagannath to pardon him. By and by Jagabandhu had a miracle in his sleep. Lord Jagannath appeared in his dream and consoled him that being an ardent and honest Sevak he should throwaway any apprehension of punishment awarded by a man. The Lord further assured that being a sincere Sevak he need not worry about a punishment ordered by a man even if he is a king and however powerful he may be. Further the Lord clarified that he can see hairs on his head tomorrow. With these consoling words Lord Jagannath vanished.

Jagabandhu got up immediately and tried to recapitulate the scene he had seen a few minutes back. Looked here and there and found no body. Now he became sure that it was no other than his God, Lord Jagannath. He was eager to see what he has seen a few moments back and finished his morning calls of nature soon. Being eager to see what he dreamt in his sleep, he rushed to the temple. On the way Jagabandhu was praying Lord Jagannath all the while without interruption till he opened the door of the main temple to have a look of the Trinity, in particular to the idol of Lord Jagannath. His happiness knew no bound when he found a long braid of hair falling from the head of Lord Jagannath and touched the feet. Now Jagabandhu was sure that his prayer had been heard by his Lord and was relieved from the impending danger of punishment.

King Prataprudra Dev was eager to find the truth of the statement of Talicha Mohapatra. So he came to the temple as usual along with his retinue of procession. While the king had Darshan of the Trinity, he asked to Talicha Mohapatra to show the hairs on the idol of Lord Jagannath. Jagabandhu in obedience to the order of the king submitted that honourable king can observe from his position the long braid of hair touching the feet. The king was surprised to see a braid of hair and did not believe it to be natural. But he saw a braid of blackish and shinning hairs over the head of the idol which was touching the ground. The king demanded of the reality of this thinking it to be artificially fixed by Talicha Mohapatra using lac or paraffin or even coal tar. Jagabandhu confidently requested the king to verify himself to find the truth. The king did not delay a moment and immediately pulled out a bunch of hairs from the braid of the idol of Lord Jagannath and found his hands had been smeared with a pool of blood.

The king, Prataprudra Dev immediately prostrated at the feet of Jagabandhu and begged for pardon to him for his folly of not believing his version. Jagabandhu raised the king from the ground and explained the entire episode which started from yesterday till the present Darshan of the king and as such he requested not to repent. At this moment the king looked at the idol of Lord Jagannath and found no braid of hair over the head of the idol which he had noticed and pulled out a bunch from the braid a moment before. It was then the blessing of the Lord Jagannath on the servitor Talicha Mohapatra. However the king rewarded Jagabandhu with a lot of money and gold and distributed sufficient alms among the poor as a part of his countering his folly of not believing an ardent Sevak of the Lord.

Dr. Pramoda Chandra Pattanayak, 678-Laxmisagar, Bhubaneswar-06, M - 9437404409.



Humanising aspects of Jagannath Culture

Dr. Ajit Kumar Mahapatra

The maiden tour to Puri
on the holy day of the car festival
the British officer, Harcourt, had
the temple priests escorted him
by clapping the hands,
after Odisha conquest in 1805 AD.

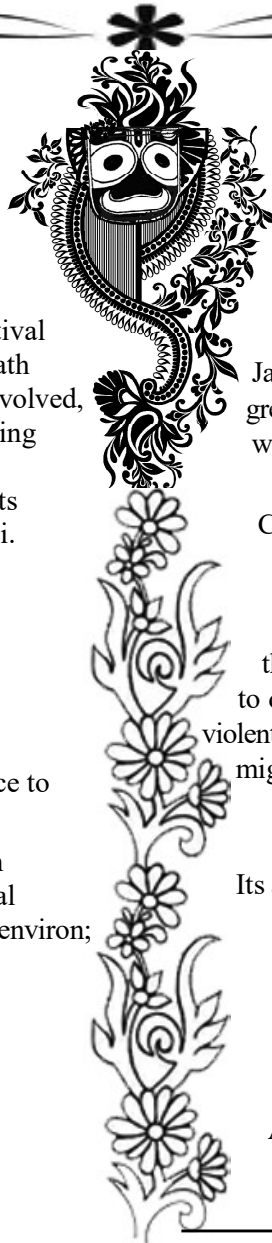
Harcourt witnessed the celebrated festival
held lavishly in honour of Lord Jagannath
the multitude of pilgrims, ecstatically involved,
dancing, singing, clapping, eagerly waiting
to pay obeisance to their Lord
the Jagannath Trinity, seated on chariots
on the crowded, broadest street of Puri.

As far Harcourt's eyes could reach
nothing could be seen
but, the heads of the pilgrims;
there was disposition to violences,
not the least ever.

Harcourt remarked, "in a political light
Its value is incalculable", with reference to
the sacred shrine of Lord Jagannath.

Oblivious of caste, creed religious faith
Pilgrims pull the chariots with great zeal
Displaying a casteless, classless societal environ;
the cult of Jagannath regarded as
the religious rituals of the masses
embodying within itself principles of
religious tolerance and love.

The grand festival
now a global ceremonial event,
willingly, observed world wide
embracing the festival as
eternal celebration of love,
of equality and fraternity,
of tolerance and inclusivity.



Jagannath is apotheosis of love
And universal brotherhood,
Most accessible to the ordinary people,
Nourishing the whole universe,
The cult strives to establish
Perpetual peace on earth
He is the Lord of the universe.

Jagannath's mission of love and togetherness
greatly impacts the global vision, promotion of
world of nonviolence ensuring a rule based
international order.

Creating a world of tolerance, compassion
Leading to ensuring a nonviolent
multicultural international order
a long and arduous task;
the world leaders must devote themselves
to develop effective world laws to end wars
violent, cruel mentality made the holocaust possible
might one day destroy the entire human race.

Limited has been the effectiveness of
The Hague, International Criminal Court,
Its authority not recognized by many nations

Let the international criminal court
be permanent, recognized by all nations,
to have effective laws by united nations
to end wars; to promote peace on earth.

To protect, and to safeguard'
The threatened climate globally
And the threatened human race on earth.

Dr. Ajit Kumar Mahapatra, Plot No.552/2988,
Pubasasan, Koushalayaganga, Bhubaneswar-2,
Mob. : 9861041150.



Car Festival - A Celestial Stream of Devotion

Er. Raghunath Patra

Rivers Ganges, Yamuna and Saraswati
assemble in Prayag, "Tirtha Raj"
Our Mahodadhi is called "Tirtha Raj",
for, all river's grand assemblage.

We can visualize difference of rivers
The Ganges is White, Yamuna Black
But Stream of river Saraswati
in whatever endeavour, blank.

Wisdom, (Jnan), Action (Karma) visible
like Ganges, the Yamuna river
Devotion (Bhakti) is quiet invisible
Which gush along blending together.

Sri Radha, Gopis, Gopals of Vrindaban
Meera Bai, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu all
forgetting their discrimination, became
one with Krishna, the Supreme whole.

Blending of society with variegation
of religions, castes is excellent
Pulling on well with democracy, excellent !
More in Car-Festival of Jagannath, Almighty.

Hearts allured, blend, melt together
No social laws work in them
All feel one, in one way traffic
Discrimination Vanish, Great charm !



Jaganneth, the Supreme sits on Car
Spreading his arms to embrace all
Lips beaming with scarlet smile
With sonorous eyes, visual equal.

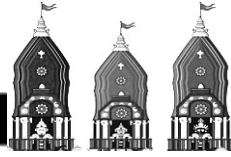
Here Adibasi daitas, Aryan
Brahmins, Balaram Das, Dasia,
Salbeg, Pathans all are equal,
Really a wonderful celestial era.

All the hands spread towards Jagannath for
ample embrace, heart in heart
Soul in soul with Supreme soul
Dust, rope, wheels, all sacred with chariots.

Car moves with "Jay Jagannath"
Poet overwhelmed, forgets his existence,
Tears roll with prayer "Give such birth"
"in all lives to witness your performance".



Er. Raghunath Patra, Brundaban Dham, Lokanath Road,
Patnahat Sahi Square, Puri - 752001.



I know You as an Odia

Hansnath Muduli

Oh ! Lord Jagannath,
Though you are the Lord of the whole Universe
and father and mother of all the creation,
I know you as an Odia.

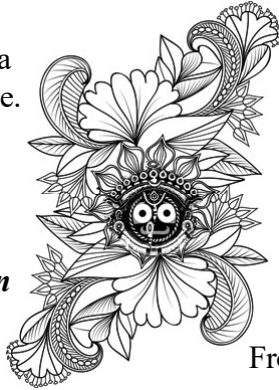
You came forward
In the conquest rally of Kanchi
With your brother Lord Balabhadra
Riding black horse and white horse.

It is no matter to me
If others agree or not,
You are an Odia to me.

You occupy the **Ratna Singhasan**
In this style of an Odia
You are always eager for
Morning water-rice (**Pakhal**)
and evening light food (**Jalajoga**)
You are also eager to accept
Sathie Pauti Bhoga
like an Odia taking bellyful rice.

You await eagerly to go to
your uncle and aunt's house,
you are greedy for all the Odia sweets and food
Isn't it, the real story of an Odia life !

We like you and you like us,
Observe thirteen festivals in twelve months,
Your observation of festivals throughout the year.
Is also watch – worthy
Isn't it the quality of an Odia !



Odia administration had spread
From Ganga to Godavari,
Odisha's flag was flying high
All over the above kingdom.

Was it possible without your Kindness ?

All the things are noted in **Madala Panji**
For future generation.

The then Odia artists explained
Odisha's Art & Culture
On dead stones so alive that
Visitors of today
Express their astonishment on it.

Really the name **Utkal** has been derived
From the superior art and culture of the state.

Odisha's name and fame have been high
Only for your Kindness
And we have gathered power
To maintain the same status
from your Highness only.

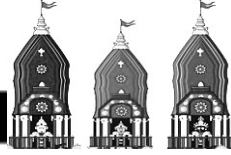
Let Odisha be engaged in works
For upliftment of the whole mankind
In all the days to come.

Hansnath Muduli, Khandagiri, (Dumuduma – A),
Bhubaneswar – 751030, Mob - 9777968719.



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Contact No.9040258858
26. a) DIPRO Office, Puri
b) ICRR, Lions Gate, Puri
Contact No.9437302618
27. a) ICRR, Rayagada
b) ICRR, Gunupur, Rayagada
Contact No.9438641785
28. DIPRO Office, Collectorate, Sambalpur
Contact No.9090508528
29. District Library, Subarnapur
Contact No.9938347678
30. ICRR, Sundargarh, Near Old Bus Stand
Contact No.9776109772
31. a) DIPRO Office, Rourkela, Hockey
Chowk, Panposh
b) City Library, Municipal Corporation,
Rourkela
Contact No. 8895552874
32. Jayadev Bhawan, State Information Centre
Contact No. 7064673438





Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik paying floral tribute to Maharaja Krushna Chandra Gajapati Narayan Dev.



'Utkal Prasanga' and 'Odisha Review' being released by dignitaries on the occasion of celebration of State Level Odisha Day at Rabindra Mandap, Bhubaneswar.



Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik inaugurating Exhibition 'Sustain: The Craft Idiom' of G20 Cultural Working Group at Kala Bhoomi, Odisha Crafts Museum, Bhubaneswar.



Hon'ble Minister, Information & Public Relations Shri Pradip Kumar Amat lighting the lamp during the celebration of Birth Anniversary of Maharaja Krushna Chandra Gajapati Narayan Dev. Director, Information & Public Relations Department Shri Saroj Kumar Samal and Editor, Utkal Prasanga & Odisha Review Kasturi Mohapatra are present during the occasion.



Ms. Jennifer Larson, Consul General of U.S. Consulate General, Hyderabad accompanied by Mr. Sean Ruthe, Political and Economic Chief of US Consulate interacting with Hon'ble Governor Prof. Ganeshi Lal at Raj Bhavan.



Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik discussing with KALIA beneficiaries on augmenting livelihood activities.



Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik with delegates travelling by first international flight to Dubai at Naveen Nibas.



The SHG leaders of District level Mission Shakti Federations travelling to Dubai being felicitated by Hon'ble Minister, Women & Child Development and Mission Shakti Smt. Basanti Hembram and Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Mission Shakti Smt. Sujata R. Karthikeyan in the presence of Advisors, Mission Shakti Dr. Lopamudra Buxipatra and Dr. Gitanjali Bastia.



Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik virtually dedicating High Schools under 5T High Schools transformation programme. 5T Secretary Shri V.K. Pandian is present during the occasion.



5T Secretary, Shri V.K. Pandian interacting with Mission Shakti Groups during his visit to Kalahandi.



Hon'ble President of India Smt. Droupadi Murmu, Hon'ble Governor Prof. Ganeshi Lal and Hon'ble Minister, Information & Public Relations Shri Pradip Kumar Amat attending the 12th Convocation ceremony of Maharaja SriRam Chandra Bhanja Deo University, Baripada.



Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik reviewing Cyclone Preparedness through Video Conferencing. 5T Secretary Shri V.K.Pandian is present during the occasion.



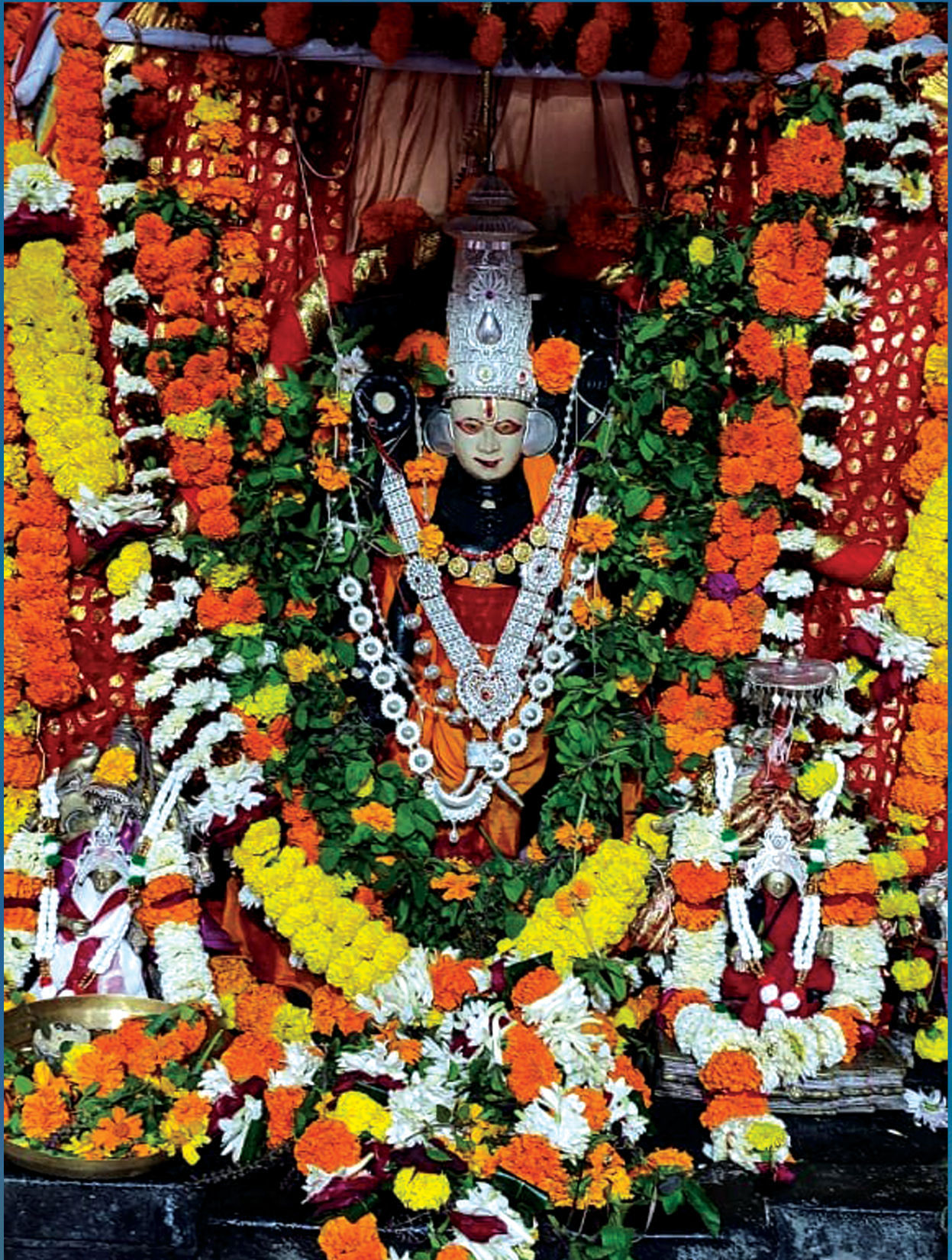
Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi virtually inaugurating Puri-Kolkata (Howrah) Bande Bharat Express. Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik virtually attending the inaugural function. Hon'ble Governor Prof. Ganeshi Lal and Hon'ble Union Ministers Shri Dharmendra Pradhan and Shri Aswini Baishnab are present during the occasion.



Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik at the launching of new Special Development Councils at Adivasi Exhibition Ground, Unit-I, Bhubaneswar. ST Secretary Shri V.K. Pandian is present during the occasion.



Memories last forever : Former Chief Ministers Shri Biju Patnaik, Dr. Giridhar Gamang during the world famous Car Festival at Puri. Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik along with former Governors of Odisha Shri C. Rangarajan, Shri M.M. Rajendran, Shri S.C. Jamir and Prof. Ganeshi Lal paying obeisance to Chaturddhamurti.



Shree Shree Madhabananda Jew, Niali Madhaba, Cuttack



Shreekshetra Chandan Yatra

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